NEWT GINGRICH'S CIVIL WAR
THOMAS J. BROWN and ELISABETH SIFTON

THE PARTY OF REAGAN V. THE PARTY OF BUSH
JOHN B. JUDIS

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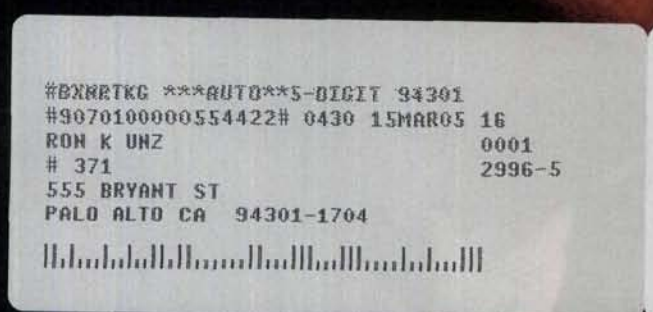
THE NEW REPUBLIC

SELLOUTS

HOW THE BUSH CAMPAIGN BOUGHT OFF RUDY GIULIANI AND JOHN McCAIN

MICHAEL CROWLEY
FRANKLIN FOER



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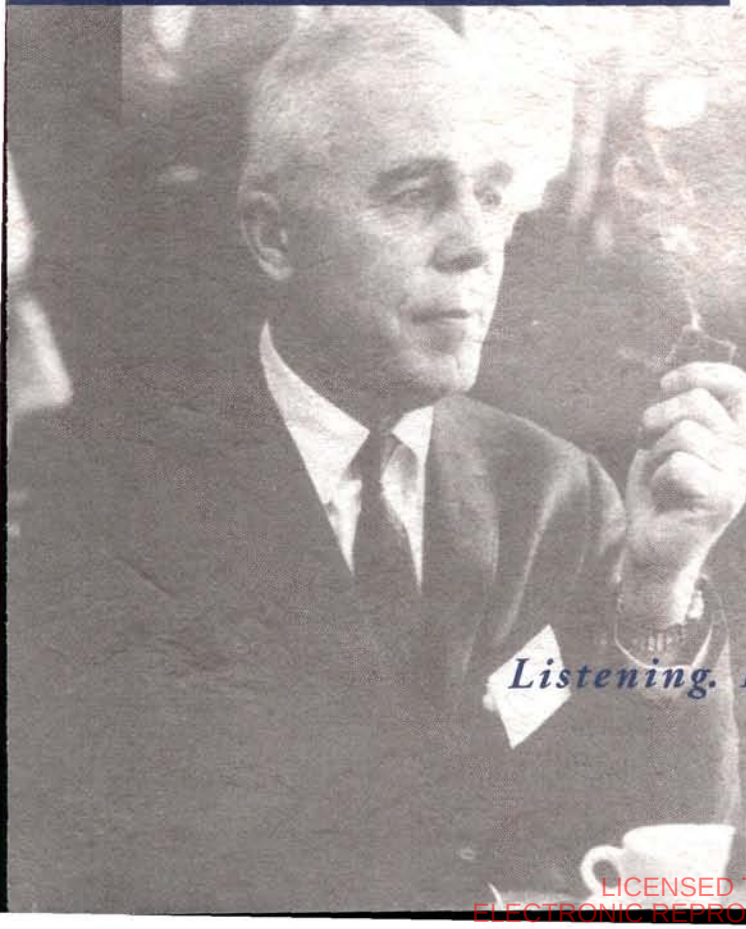

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CORRESPONDENCE

LIBERAL GUILT

STANLEY KAUFFMANN'S WISE—and, at times, generously angry—criticism is one of THE NEW REPUBLIC's strongest assets. It is therefore deeply disappointing that he chooses to go easy on such a crude propaganda effort as Michael Moore's *Fahrenheit 9/11*, whose anger has no generosity and whose opposition to George W. Bush's war, like his opposition to Bill Clinton's war against Slobodan Milosevic, is motivated by a hatred of the United States that is, at bottom, deeply illiberal ("Accusation," July 19). Bush hatred is not an excuse for failing to call the poison of our own era's Father Coughlin by its true name; as liberals, the responsibility for doing so rests squarely on our shoulders. Moore's garbage immeasurably degrades the quality of public discourse and undermines the struggle against Islamist fascism.

TOM MCLAUGHLIN
Irving, Texas

KAUFFMANN WRITES, "MOORE OMITS the familiar shot of the toppling of a Saddam Hussein statue, possibly because it would redound to Bush's credit." Actually, including that footage would only strengthen Moore's case, since the Army now admits that they orchestrated the "spontaneous" event.

GREG MARKUS
Ann Arbor, Michigan

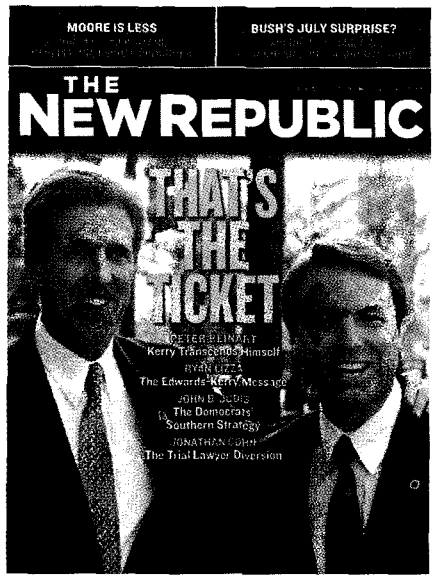
BETTER LATE?

WHY SHOULD WE BE SURPRISED that the Bush administration was offering Pakistan incentives to produce a high-value target during the Democratic convention ("July Surprise?" July 19)? Integrity in U.S foreign policy is not a Bush value; winning the election at any cost is.

MAJOR ROBERT TORMEY
U.S. Air Force, Retired
Escondido, California

DIRECTION CORRECTION

PETER BEINART DESCRIBES TWO presidential candidates ("Confidence Game," July 19). One—John Kerry—discarded his themes and adopted those of his primary opponents because they seemed more appealing to the public. Another—George W. Bush—



refused to adopt the proposals of one of his primary candidates (in 2000) and continued advocating his own ideas. Beinart considers the actions of the first admirable, a sign of strength, and the latter a sign of rigidity. I find a candidate who is willing to adhere to positions regardless of their popularity far more admirable than a candidate willing to change themes at the first sign they are not catching on with the public. Opportunism is not my idea of self-confidence.

RUTH BOYLAN
Englewood, New Jersey

THOUGHT GAME

WHY DOES HELEN VENDLER demote philosophy, history, and religion to the "periphery" of the humanities ("The Ocean, the Bird, and the Scholar," July 19)? Her reasons seem to rest on faulty assumptions. The sort of history that ignored "individual human uniqueness" is no longer dominant (if it ever was). The historian who believes in "universal solutions" to historical questions is rare, and the philosopher who ignores the fact of human individuality is not a terribly good philosopher. Most strange to me is Vendler's suggestion "that the humanities should take, as their central objects of study, not the texts of historians or philosophers, but the products of aesthetic endeavor." Perhaps Socrates does not tell me *more* about the human condition than does Isabel Archer, but Vendler implies that he tells me *less*. Really? Elsewhere in the essay, she is more ecumenical, as when she remarks on "symbolic representations" of "art and music, religion, philosophy, and history." In fact, the humanistic study that Vendler seems to want is already taking place. Cultural historians engage in careful study of literary texts, while "new historicist" critics attend to social contexts. The rise of "cultural studies" as a common forum for historians, philosophers, social scientists, literary scholars, and art historians makes decisions about which disciplines are central or peripheral difficult to render. To be sure, departments compete for financial resources, but it would be wrong to translate this into an intellectual zero-sum game.

ADAM SHEAR
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

THREE CHEERS FOR VENDLER'S ARTICLE on the need for a humanistic education. Whenever politicians (Republican or Democrat) speak of "education," they always mean science and math—and huge sums of money to support those disciplines. I shudder at a civilization, such as ours today, in which the humanities are unsupported or under-supported and in which every child is computer literate but doesn't know how to read a novel. Vendler is absolutely right when she points out that the arts give birth to our emotional lives and, therefore, our humanity. Plato recognized this. Asked whether he would sacrifice his emotional life for all the knowledge in the world, he replied emphatically, "No." My vote goes to the politician who recognizes this.

ROBERTA KALECHOFSKY
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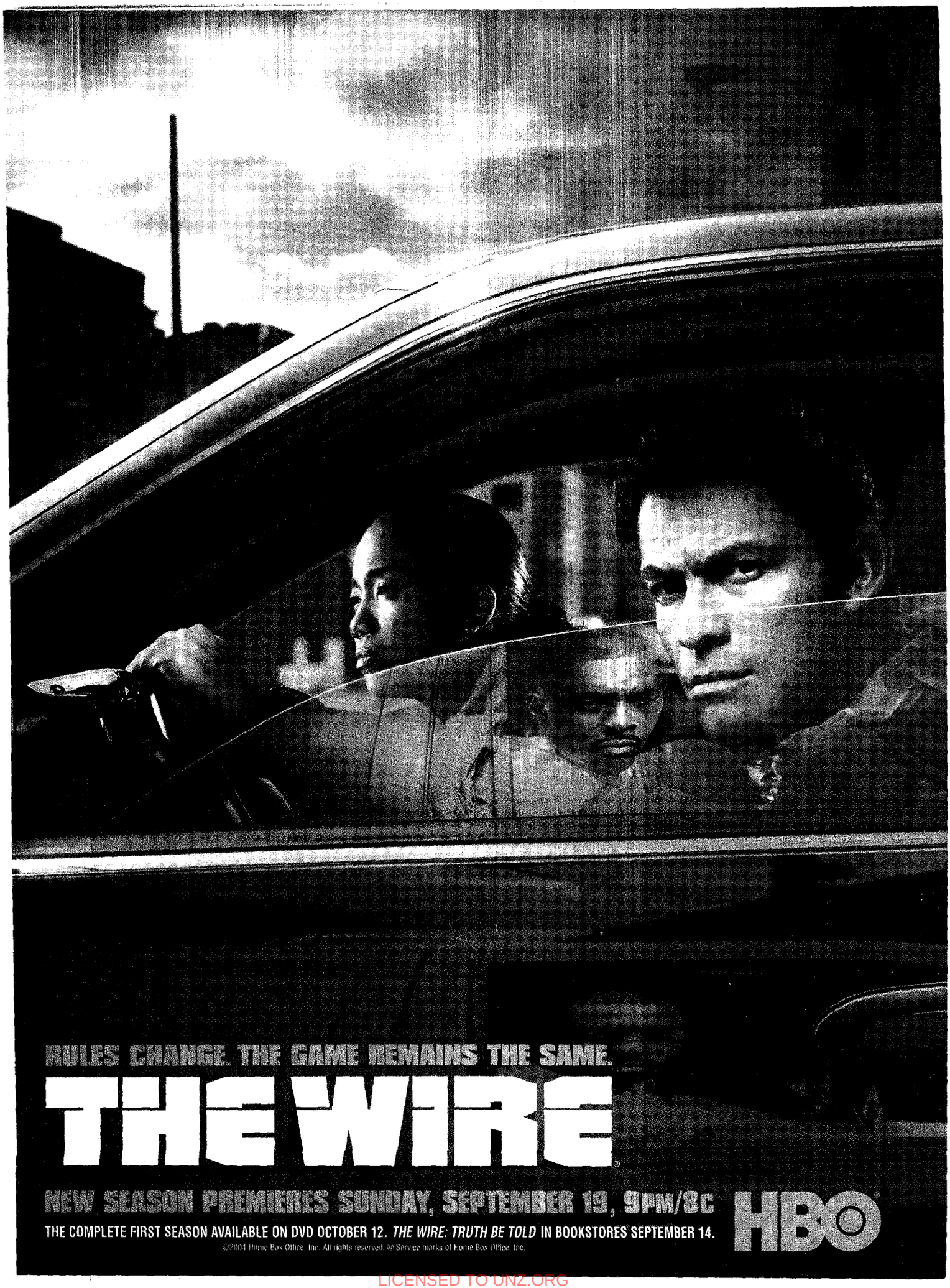
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Apocalypse Redux

TRB
FROM WASHINGTON

PUT ASIDE THE CLAIMS THAT John Kerry doesn't deserve his Vietnam medals—claims debunked in newspaper after newspaper, claims that, as the *Los Angeles Times* recently editorialized, "no informed person can seriously believe." Put aside the question of whether John Kerry was *in* Cambodia on Christmas Eve 1968, as he has (probably incorrectly) claimed. As *Slate*'s Fred Kaplan notes, Kerry's diaries say he was "patrolling *near* the Cambodian line" on that day. (At least one of his crewmates says it was "very hard to tell.") Does that distinction really constitute an important campaign issue?

The medals and the Cambodia charges are partisan hack stuff, cynically repeated in service of the greater Republican good. What genuinely upsets conservatives—including conservative veterans—is something different. First, conservatives think it's hypocritical for Kerry, who denounced the war, to now take credit for having fought in it. As *The Wall Street Journal* editorialized this week, Kerry has "managed the oxymoronic feat of celebrating both his own war-fighting valor *and* his antiwar activities when he returned home." But what's oxymoronic about that? What Kerry "celebrates" is that he volunteered for Vietnam—and served heroically—when elites (including Bill Clinton, Dan Quayle, and George W. Bush) were finding ways not to go. That's noble, even if Kerry thinks the war itself was not. And, if Kerry is a hypocrite for having served in a war he opposed, what about Dick Cheney—who avoided serving in a war he supported?

The second thing that genuinely angers conservatives—including some of Kerry's fellow swift boat captains—is that he called the war immoral. Kerry began his famous 1971 Senate testimony by recounting the recent Winter Soldier Investigation, in which soldiers spoke of atrocities they had committed. The Swift Boat Veterans for Truth's latest anti-Kerry ad intersperses his graphic descriptions of those atrocities (without explaining that he was paraphrasing firsthand accounts) with outraged veterans saying his testimony "betrayed us" and "dishonored his country."

What the ad doesn't argue, however, is that Kerry's charges were false. It merely suggests he was unpatriotic for leveling them. That's consistent with the way conservatives have discussed Vietnam throughout this campaign. In February, when Tim Russert asked whether he had supported the war, President Bush replied, "I supported my government"—as if supporting the war was a matter of loyalty rather than judgment. Mackubin Thomas Owens's influential May *National Review* article about Kerry's antiwar testimony accuses Kerry of "'Americaniz[ing]' Soviet propaganda"—suggesting that, by calling war crimes widespread, Kerry was serving the enemy. In the new ad, one veteran says, "Kerry gave the enemy for free what I, and many of my, uh, comrades in North Vietnam, in the prison camps, uh, took torture to avoid saying."

Calling Kerry unpatriotic is a useful way of delegitimizing his allegations without disproving them. Some of the organizers of the Winter Soldier Investigation have been discredited, but most of the testimonies themselves have not. Miami University Professor Jeffrey Kimball, one of the most respected Vietnam historians, says, "On the whole, the Winter Soldier Investigations established that some Americans committed atrocities in Vietnam. Claims that their testimony has been discredited are unwarranted." Another prominent historian of the war, Wayne State University's Mel Small, says, "Most of the evidence of atrocities presented by the [Winter Soldier] vets remains unchallenged to this day."

On the question of atrocities more broadly, Kerry's claims also find widespread academic support. The University of Kentucky's George Herring, author of *America's Longest War*, says, "The atrocities that took place are pretty much those described by Kerry in 1971." In a recent interview with *The Boston Globe*, Stanley Karnow, author of *Vietnam: A History*, also said Kerry got it right. Even Robert McNamara himself has stated that "there were atrocities, without any question. . . . I don't think enough attention was paid to it by the chain of command."

Conservatives have taken special umbrage at Kerry's statement, in a 1971 "Meet the Press" interview, that he "committed the same kind of atrocities as thousands of other soldiers." What they generally ignore is that Kerry was referring to the fact that he "took part in shootings in free-fire zones"—zones where the U.S. military designated any Vietnamese who did not evacuate as combatants. And Kerry was right: The free-fire zones violated the fourth Geneva Convention, which outlaws indiscriminate attacks against areas in which civilians are present.

In the end, though, Kerry's claims about American atrocities can't be separated from his claims about the war itself. "There is nothing in South Vietnam which could happen that realistically threatens the United States," he told the Senate in 1971. Most Vietnamese, he argued, wanted "this foreign presence of the United States of America to leave them alone in peace." It was because the war lacked any strategic or moral justification that Kerry deemed the atrocities committed in its name to be so indefensible.

It is that fervent moral opposition to Vietnam that so galls conservatives today—and that, they claim, undergirds his supposed hostility to American power ever since. And yet, conservatives want to discredit Kerry for being against the war without defending it themselves. In the August 30 *Weekly Standard*, Bill Kristol wrote that "John Kerry was hostile, to say the least, to the exercise of American power in 1971." Does Kristol think the further exercise of that power in Vietnam would have been wise? *The Wall Street Journal* editorial page recently chastised Kerry for urging "retreat . . . when Vietnam became difficult." Do they think America should have charged ahead? Do they think America could have defeated the communists? And at what cost?

Kerry's detractors are trying to have it both ways. They want to denounce him for calling the war immoral without explaining why they disagree. So instead they call his opposition disloyal, weak, a character flaw—just like Richard Nixon's men did three decades ago.

PETER BEINART

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Hot Button Issues

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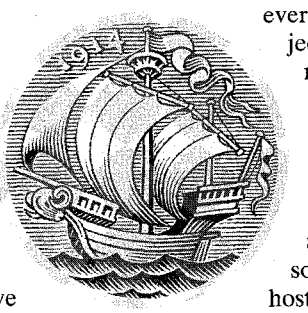
Matter of Fact

JUST HOW DISHONEST must a smear campaign be for American journalists to say so plainly—or, better yet, to ignore altogether? That's the only real question still unanswered in the controversy sparked by the group Swift Boat Veterans for Truth over John Kerry's service in Vietnam—although even to use the word "controversy" affords the issue's protagonists too much dignity. The veterans featured in the organization's TV ad claim to have "served with Kerry," but none actually served on the same boat. (Yes, we've been reduced to arguing over what the definition of "with" is.) Several of the charges are based on recollections by veterans who, years earlier, had praised Kerry for the very same actions. The accusation that Kerry faked one of his injuries turns out to come from a thirdhand account. Most important of all, the surviving crewmembers from Kerry's boat—as well as Navy records—back Kerry's version of events. As the *Los Angeles Times* editorialized this week, citing one of its own reporters' fine work debunking the Swift Boat Veterans, "no informed person can seriously believe that Kerry fabricated evidence to win his military medals."

Unfortunately, even as reporters eviscerated the Swift Boat Veterans' essential claims, the conventions of evenhandedness (at least on news, as opposed to editorial, pages) prevented them from stating their findings in bald, unvarnished terms. And so writers for papers like *The Washington Post* repeatedly played the dispute as a he-said, she-said campaign argument, seizing on the relatively minor discrepancies in Kerry's story (chiefly Kerry's questionable claim that his boat had gone into Cambodia on Christmas Eve, 1968) and then balancing those against the far more egregious distortions they had found in the swift boat ads. "Both sides have withheld information from the public record and provided an incomplete, and sometimes inaccurate, picture of what took place," read the key passage from a lengthy front-page story in Sunday's *Post*. "But although Kerry's accusers have succeeded in raising doubts about his war record, they have failed to come up with sufficient evidence to prove him a liar." And, while careful readers could parse the truth, more casual readers were left to take their cues from headlines like "VETERANS BATTLE OVER THE TRUTH" or "SWIFT BOAT ACCOUNTS INCOMPLETE," which compounded the misimpression that there was something ambiguous, if not downright suspicious, about Kerry's military record.



But it wasn't primarily the print media that kept this story alive. It was television, particularly cable news, with all of its now-familiar pathologies. Predictably, Fox News hyped the story, weaving it seamlessly into a larger narrative about Kerry's character flaws. (Here's Brit Hume, Fox's analogue to Peter Jennings or Dan Rather: "There's a thread here that one might trace through the criticisms of John Kerry and his behavior, even in this campaign, and that is the sense of somebody who is an absolutely incorrigible opportunist.") And the less ideological CNN and MSNBC did their parts to sustain the controversy by running the Swift Boat ads repeatedly during their news segments, then giving the same old discredited Kerry critics a platform to continue spewing their same old discredited arguments.

The effect was to spread lies rather than scrutinize them, in a precise perversion of journalism's supposed purpose. More than half of the respondents to a survey by the Annenberg Public Policy Center said they had seen or heard of the Swift Boat ad, which initially ran in only three swing states. And the polling firm HCD Research found that 27 percent of independent voters who saw the ad and "who [had] planned to vote for Kerry or leaned pro-Kerry" were "no longer sure they'd back" him.

Journalists, in short, became accomplices to fraud. And they should have known better. In 2000, Bush and his right-wing allies learned that the way to win political arguments is to launch rhetorical attacks based only loosely—if at all—on the facts and then depend on reporters to spread them as credible perspectives on the truth. And, ever since, this White House has conducted its business the very same way, shamelessly peddling lies about everything from budget projections to weapons of mass destruction without the slightest fear of retribution.

A few days ago, cable news had a rare moment of clarity when an unlikely voice of reason, MSNBC "Hardball" host Chris Matthews, lashed out at conservative pundit Michelle Malkin for suggesting that Kerry had shot himself to win a Purple Heart—an accusation even more far-fetched than the swift boat ad's. As Matthews later told columnist Lloyd Grove, "If someone is saying something that factually can't be proved, it's my job to call them on it." He's absolutely right. How sad that he's largely alone. ■

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NOTEBOOK

CHUCK HAGEL WON'T DEFEND KERRY . . . ALASKAN INTERCEPTORS WON'T DEFEND US

AWOL

AT THE 2000 REPUBLICAN CONvention in Philadelphia, retired General Colin Powell gave a ringing endorsement of presidential nominee George W. Bush and his running mate, Dick Cheney. "The Bush-Cheney team will be a great team for America," Powell declared. "They will put our nation on a course of hope and optimism for this new century." But Powell won't be delivering a similar endorsement at this year's Republican convention. In fact, he won't even be there.

On August 10, State Department deputy spokesman Adam Ereli said, "On White House instruction, Secretary Powell, as well as others among the Cabinet, will not attend. This is in keeping with past practice." The explanation was accepted at face value. *The Washington Post* wrote that "in keeping with tradition, Cabinet officials do not speak at conventions—or other campaign events. So Powell will not appear." There's just one problem with this explanation: It's completely false.

Cabinet members have regularly appeared at conventions. At this year's convention, Secretary of Education Rod Paige and Secretary of Labor Elaine Chao will be speaking, and Secretary of Commerce Don Evans will be stirring up support behind the scenes. And secretaries of state have not been absent from past conventions. In 2000, Clinton's secretary of state, Madeleine Albright, attended and spoke at a forum; in 1992, George H.W. Bush's secretary of state, James Baker, who was about to become his campaign manager, was extremely active in Houston. In 1988, Ronald Reagan's secretary of state, George Shultz, was in New Orleans speaking to state delegations. And, in 1980, Jimmy Carter's secretary of state, Edmund Muskie, was on hand and gave a speech.

Of course, there could be another explanation for why Powell won't be in New York—that, this time around, he is not prepared to say Bush and Cheney "will be a great team for America."

Colin Powell

DUCK AND COVER

SPEAKING TO BOEING EMPLOYEES in Pennsylvania last week, President Bush had a little surprise to help them sleep at night: "Another thing that's interesting that's happening at Boeing that probably you aren't aware of, but you should be, is that Boeing engineers lowered the first ballistic missile interceptor into its silo at Fort Greely, Alaska." If the audience wasn't aware that the Bush administration had begun to deploy a national missile defense, it's probably because the White House, until now, has not wanted to brag about fielding interceptors that have never been tested. As the General Accounting Office put it in April, "[s]ystem effectiveness will be largely unproven when the initial capability goes on alert at the end of September 2004." (That's bureaucratese for, "You'd be safer just hiding under your desk.") But more surprising than Bush's decision to tout this Potemkin defense is his ploy to use it as proof of his post–September 11 bona fides: "I think those who oppose this ballistic missile system really don't understand the threats of the twenty-first century. They're living in the past. We're living in the future." Hmm. Which future would that be? The one in which Al Qaeda operatives heave a 50-ton ICBM from a Russian missile silo?

Perhaps the president was referring to North Korea and Iran, but given his repeated conflation of the terrorist threat with that posed by rogue states, his speech was more than likely a sly suggestion that missile defense skeptics—like John Kerry—are soft on terrorism. In truth, it's the president's understanding of today's threats seems decidedly, well, twentieth-century: "[The Alaska interceptors are] the beginning of a missile defense system that was envisioned by Ronald Reagan, a system necessary to protect us against the threats of the twenty-first century." So Star Wars, a harebrained scheme designed to defend against thousands of nuclear missiles from a cold war enemy that no longer exists, is the template for the war on terrorism? Perhaps the Boeing employees would have slept better not knowing.

MISSING IN ACTION

WHEN, IN THE 2000 REPUBLIcan presidential primaries, an ally of then–Texas Governor George W. Bush accused John McCain of having abandoned his fellow veterans, the five other Vietnam vets then serving in the Senate—Massachusetts Democrat John Kerry, Georgia Democrat Max Cleland, Nebraska Republican Chuck Hagel, Nebraska Democrat Bob Kerrey, and Virginia Democrat Chuck Robb—rallied to McCain's side, demanding that Bush disassociate himself from the comments. A year later, when Kerrey, who

DAVID COWLES

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had recently retired from the Senate, admitted civilians were killed in a 1969 raid his Navy Seal outfit conducted, Kerry, Cleland, Hagel, and McCain all appeared on ABC's "This Week" to defend their old colleague's honor and plead for understanding. And, in 2002, when Georgia Senate Republican candidate Saxby Chambliss ran an ad juxtaposing Cleland's face with those of Saddam Hussein and Osama bin Laden, Hagel and McCain demanded that Chambliss take the "very bad, irresponsible, and disgusting commercial," as Hagel called it, off the air. "We are a band of brothers," Cleland said of the Senate Vietnam vets during an interview with Larry King in 2000. Kerry, appearing on the same show, added: "I think there's a special bond of friendship that crosses party lines."

But Kerry might want to reconsider those comments in light of the support—or lack thereof—he's received across party lines from Hagel and McCain in the face of the recent attacks on his service record by the Swift Boat Veterans for Truth (SBVT). McCain has denounced SBVT's ad but, even though Bush has refused to do the same, continues to campaign for him (see Franklin Foer, "Opportunism Knocks," page 22). McCain, however, is a veritable profile in courage compared with Hagel, who has said nary a word in Kerry's defense. On August 9, appearing on MSNBC's "Hardball," Hagel argued that the ads "are not coordinated with the White House, and they're not coordinated with the Republican Party." Then he lamented that the SBVT ads were a symptom of McCain-Feingold, which "neutered the parties" and made it impossible to control partisan advertising. In other words, Hagel's comments about the ads completely mirror those of President Bush himself. Hagel's communications director told TNR his boss was traveling in Africa and would have no further statement on the ads until his return, "unless he calls me and wants to issue one." We won't hold our breath. ■

TNR.commentary

Campaign Journal

RYAN LIZZA

GREAT EXPECTATIONS: Everyone knows the Bush campaign has mastered the art of setting expectations. But now the Kerry campaign is getting into the game. On August 24, Kerry pollster Mark Mellman sent out an e-mail making the case that Bush has the potential for a significant bump after the GOP convention. Here are the "benchmarks" Mellman argued should be used to determine whether Bush's convention is a success:

> In recent polling, Bush's average approval rating has been 48%. President Bush must emerge from his convention having dramatically altered public perception of his performance in office. . . .
>
> [J]ust 37% think things are moving in the right direction. Thus, President Bush must convince the electorate that the nation is in much better shape than voters now believe to be the case. . . .
>
> Following their conventions, the average elected incumbent has held a 16-point lead, while winning incumbents have led by an average of 27 points. Bush will need a very substantial bounce to reach the mark set by his successful predecessors. Incumbents have enjoyed an average bounce in the vote margin of 8 points.

Not surprisingly, Bush strategist Matthew Dowd, who predicted that Kerry would have a 15-point lead in August, has said—for whatever mysterious reasons—he does not expect Bush to get any convention bounce.

PURPLE HEART POLITICS: Republican pollster Tony Fabrizio released a memo on August 23 about the effect that the anti-Kerry Swifties might be having. Revealing just how politically important John Kerry's military record is, Fabrizio's poll of 19 battleground states finds:

> Overall, among those voters who know that Sen. Kerry was awarded 3 Purple Hearts (69.9% of the sample), Sen. Kerry leads President Bush by more than 12 points. That is 10 points GREATER than his overall lead and more than 7 points GREATER than among those voters who know he is a Vietnam Veteran (88.8% of the sample).

Introducing uncertainty about Kerry's awards helps Bush. The president has a huge lead (51 to 37 percent) among voters in the battleground states who say they are unsure or don't know whether Kerry won three Purple Hearts. Fabrizio's conclusion:

> [I]f "Swift Boat Veterans for Truth" can successfully raise questions in the voters' minds about the status of Sen. Kerry's medals, it will result in shifting votes in President Bush's direction.

Fabrizio also finds that Kerry is stronger on Iraq, terrorism, and national defense among voters who know about the medals than among those who don't. There's a good reason Kerry has emphasized this part of his biography, and there's a good reason Republicans are trying to undermine it.

&c.

NOAM SCHEIBER

A KERRY LANDSLIDE IN OHIO? *The Washington Post* buries the lede in an August 23 story about Ohio's scandal-plagued Republican Party. After 20 paragraphs of inside baseball, paragraph 21 notes the following:

> In a survey last week by the University of Cincinnati's Ohio Poll, Sen. John F. Kerry (D-Mass.) led Bush among likely voters 48 to 46 percent, with independent Ralph Nader garnering 1 percent. A Gallup poll in Ohio also showed a two-point spread favoring Kerry, but when the pool of respondents was expanded to include all registered voters, not just people who voted last time, *Kerry was ahead by 10 points* [emphasis added].

Whaaa. . . ? From what I can make out, Gallup conducted the poll last week, meaning the Kerry swift boat controversy was already in full bloom. That Kerry would still have a ten-point lead among registered voters is pretty impressive. Also encouraging is the fact that turnout in Ohio is likely to be higher than it was in 2000—particularly on the Democratic side, since Team Gore essentially abandoned the state toward the end of the campaign. That means a poll of registered voters may be closer to Election Day reality than a poll of likely voters based on turnout in 2000.

One huge variable is the possibility of an anti-gay marriage ballot initiative in Ohio this November. The results of a similar initiative in Missouri earlier this month suggest such initiatives may disproportionately motivate conservatives to vote, with negligible effect on Democratic turnout. (Turnout in Missouri increased from 1.1 million to 1.5 million versus the previous comparable election; the initiative passed by a 71–29 margin.)

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Campaign Journal

Defense Less

BY RYAN LIZZA

NEVER IN A campaign has a more disreputable group of people, whose accusations have been repeatedly contradicted by official records and reliable eyewitness accounts, had their claims taken so seriously. John Kerry's accounts of his military service are supported by U.S. Navy documents, his crewmates, and—in the case of the engagement for which Kerry won the Silver Star—the only other living officer who witnessed the event.

As for those disputing his record, Steve Gardner, the man trotted out as an expert on Kerry's first Purple Heart because he served on Kerry's boat, wasn't even on board the day Kerry came under fire. George Elliott, the man who recommended Kerry for the Silver Star but who now criticizes the award as fraudulent, has shifted from supporter to critic to supporter to critic in the span of months. John O'Neill, the co-author of *Unfit for Command*, argues that Kerry faked the report that led to his third Purple Heart and his Bronze Star. His supposed evidence: John F. Kerry's initials are on the document. But the letters actually scrawled on the page are KJW. O'Neill also claims Kerry was never in Cambodia because his own swift boat patrols never came within 50 miles of the Cambodian border. Yet, O'Neill told Richard Nixon in the Oval Office in 1971, "I was in Cambodia, sir. I worked along the border on the water." As for O'Neill's co-author, Jerome R. Corsi, he has left a bizarre trail of bigoted comments about "ragheads" and papal-approved "boy-buggering" on *FreeRepublic.com*, the modern home of the loony, conspiratorial right.

It's not inconceivable that Kerry exaggerated his war record—it's just not proven. And, of course, lots of things aren't inconceivable. Back in 1999, reporters thought it plausible George W. Bush had snorted cocaine, but, when a scurrilous book by a disreputable author made that allegation, the author didn't end up on the Sunday shows. The press shunned the book, the Bush campaign threatened the author with libel, and the story went away. As for the author, he ended up disgraced and penniless and eventually killed himself.

But, as much as the press bears responsibility for the last few weeks of wall-to-wall Swiftee coverage, many Democrats, who have been tearing their hair out as they have watched this story unfold like a slow-motion car wreck, aren't just angry at the media. They are also blaming the Kerry campaign for allowing the accusations to metastasize into a clear threat to a Democratic victory.

THE MOST FREQUENTLY heard argument is that, however false the accusations are, the episode underscores a serious weakness in Kerry's case for the presidency. "All of the focus of the campaign was Vietnam, partly because nobody knew what else to talk about," says a Democrat close to the campaign. "I think it didn't have to be important, but it is because John Kerry hasn't been strong on anything else and hasn't enunciated any vision on the war. ... This is the price you pay for having the campaign so focused on the biography."

Other Democrats level a related critique: that the martial emphasis of the Democratic convention helped Kerry match Bush on national security but also left voters hungry for details about his domestic agenda, curtailing any bounce in the polls. Kerry aides argue that the convention was a unique opportunity to tell a man-bites-dog story about a Democrat who cares about national security. They say the plan was always to build up Kerry's bona fides on the war and terrorism and then pivot in August to his message on the economy and domestic issues. But the Swiftees may have set back what Kerry accomplished in Boston, and they certainly smothered his attempts to talk about other issues in August.

Another argument is that the Kerry campaign has learned the wrong lessons from Michael Dukakis's defeat. Kerry and his staff are consumed with the idea that Dukakis lost in 1988 because he failed to respond to his opponents' accusations. "Rapid response" has been an obsession inside the Kerry campaign from the beginning. But the lesson of Dukakis is not just that responses need to be fast, but that they also need to be specific and credible. Fellow Democrats lament that the Kerry campaign's responses are quick but off-target. Instead of engaging the substance of an accusation, even when the facts are overwhelmingly on their side, the campaign's counterpunches sometimes seem as if they are scripted by an overeager college Democrat who knows only that Bush and Republicans are very bad. For instance, one Kerry campaign adviser points to a statement released after the White House press secretary attacked Kerry for coming unhinged. "Mr. McClellan needs to understand," the statement said in a non sequitur, "that John Kerry is not the type of leader who will sit and read 'My Pet Goat' to a group of second-graders while America is under attack."

The Swift Boat controversy has been bubbling for months, and inside the campaign, some aides, such as John Hurley, Kerry's veterans' coordinator, and John Martilla, a senior adviser, had been making the case that Kerry needed to get ahead of the story. The consensus—and perhaps not unreasonable—view, however, was that aggressively taking on the Swiftees would only raise awareness of their accusations. Still, Democrats outside the campaign are astounded at how unprepared the first Kerry surrogates were to do battle with the vets on the cable chat shows. For example, when O'Neill made his first round of TV appearances, the Kerry campaign sent out Jeh Johnson, a former Air Force

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attorney, to rebut him. Though he is a telegenic and savvy spokesman, Johnson got buried by a barrage of accusations from *Unfit for Command* for which he seemed to have no specific fact-based response.

The first instincts of the campaign were to change the subject and decry the "right-wing slime machine" rather than forcefully rebut each allegation with the facts, which have always been on their side. That eventually changed, and the campaign itself, without leaving fingerprints, was instrumental in getting facts into news stories that discredited the accusers. But by then, some Democrats complain, the damage had been done.

The campaign's defenders argue—persuasively—that the rules of the game changed on them. Cable's obsessive treatment of the story, where guests armed with shotgun blasts of erroneous accusations appeared as equals with Kerry defenders, was qualitatively different from the more responsible approach of the three main networks and the major dailies. "Part of the problem is that, when people make things up, it's hard to be prepared for every twist things take," says a Democrat close to the campaign. "Every time stuff came up, our folks were out there batting it down. But the standards were different. The standards on the cable shows are not what they were with the nets and the papers. They don't care whether its true or not [on cable]."

A final postmortem critique is that the last few weeks highlighted the need to revamp Kerry's communications staff. Senior communications aides have been turf-conscious and reluctant to share authority with others. But, at the peak of the Swiftee frenzy, the campaign finally added two old Clinton pros to help out. Former White House Press Secretary Joe Lockhart will now serve as the traveling press secretary, while ex-Clinton adviser Joel Johnson will run the campaign's war room, a position aides say had never been clearly defined. After the toughest stretch of the campaign thus far, the news was greeted like a breath of fresh air at Kerry headquarters. "It's like the adults are coming in to babysit the kids," says one staffer. "I've been in meetings where I think, 'What the fuck experience do any of us have with this stuff?' These guys are adults."

Despite all the Monday-morning quarterbacking, it's unclear how much Kerry will be hurt by the whole episode. A case can be made that neither campaign really wanted this debate but both are now stuck with it. Bush's association with the Swiftees, and his failure to condemn the ads, calls into question his character, which is the heart of his campaign, just as much as the recent allegations call into question Kerry's military biography, which is the heart of his campaign. Indeed, by midweek, the momentum of the story had shifted from a debate about Kerry to one about Bush. "It's almost as if the two campaigns have wandered into Gettysburg," says Carter Eskew, a top strategist for Al Gore in 2000. "They did not choose to have this battle in this location." But the outcome could end up deciding the war. ■

London Dispatch

Silk Purse

BY OLIVER BURKEMAN

Only a two-and-a-half-hour train ride from the grubby heart of London lies Brussels, Belgium, a city so full of cobbled squares and idyllic sidewalk cafés that it sometimes seems the national sport is civilized conversation, lubricated by some of the world's finest beer. So when Nigel Farage, a British member of the Brussels-based European parliament, recently told an interviewer he thought the Belgian capital was "just about the most hideous place on Earth," one wondered how much he had traveled. But then Farage, a leading member of the United Kingdom Independence Party (UKIP), is an odd creature—a member of a legislature he joined with the explicit intention of destroying it, or, at the least, of pulling Britain out of the European Union. Odder still, his eccentric band of wreckers suddenly finds itself wielding extraordinary influence over Britain's political future.

It's easy to dismiss UKIP, and the resurgence of anti-European feeling in Britain, as a joke. Indeed, the party seems to go out of its way to provide opportunities for ridicule. In July, Godfrey Bloom, a UKIP politician hoping to join a European parliament committee on women's rights, told lawmakers considering his application that he thought women should "spend more time cleaning behind the refrigerator." Then Bloom insisted he was no misogynist. He loved the women in his native region of Yorkshire, he said, because they always had dinner ready on the table.

UKIP's performance at the ballot box, however, is no joke. In the European elections in June, when voters across the continent chose representatives for the parliament, the party scooped up 16 percent of the British vote, more than twice what it got in the last Euro-election. And the numbers indicate national trends: With British feelings on the proposed new European Constitution running at least two-to-one against, these are happy times for Euroskeptics in the United Kingdom. In fact, UKIP's success is part of a broader lurch right in grassroots British politics. It is also a testament to the major parties' failure to convince most Britons that they really belong to Europe.

Yet, the biggest irony of the rise of UKIP is what it means for Prime Minister Tony Blair. Although the party opposes nearly everything he stands for on Europe, it may actually help him win a third term, despite his tribulations over Iraq. Meanwhile, UKIP might damage Britain's Conservative Party. Brought to its knees by Labor's 1997 landslide victory,

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it is now hemorrhaging votes to UKIP. In fact, the former "natural party of government" is as close to outright collapse as it's ever been.

UKIP'S STRONGEST SUIT isn't its grasp of policy. It's Robert Kilroy-Silk, a former talk-show host better known more for his deep orange permatan than his understanding of agricultural subsidies legislation. For almost two decades, the suave Kilroy-Silk plied his trade on BBC daytime television as a sort of British Jerry Springer—his guests' problems were less lurid, but more dispiriting—until, early this year, he ran into a self-created problem. In a tabloid newspaper column headlined "WE OWE ARABS NOTHING," he ranted in general terms against "the Arabs," asking: "[Do they think] that we admire them for being suicide bombers, limb amputators, women repressors?" His remarks sparked an uproar, and he left the BBC for UKIP, winning election to the European parliament. In his debut speech, he told his fellow 732 legislators: "We want our country back, and, believe you me, we're going to get it!"

Kilroy-Silk's rabble-rousing hints at associations with the extreme right that UKIP denies, declaring itself as appalled as anyone by gains being made in local elections by the quasi-fascist British National Party. But, according to Britain in Europe, a pro-Brussels organization, at least two senior figures in UKIP's leadership were former members of the extremist New Britain Party, founded to oppose all "colored immigration" to the United Kingdom.

In any other political climate, mainstream parties would dismiss UKIP's members as fringe elements, leaving them to work themselves into rages about European conspiracies to steal Britain's sovereignty. The problem is that the EU is a ripe target for UKIP's criticism, which plays well with Britons and the United Kingdom's right-wing press, long outraged at the EU's broad regulatory powers and the prospect of immigration from the EU's newer states. To the average Briton, the Union is still best known as the source of mind-bogglingly nitpicky "directives"—most famously, the attempt to regulate exactly how curved bananas imported into the EU must be. Its bureaucracy gobbles at least ten million pounds from Britain's treasury every day. Millions of pounds are wasted each year so the European parliament can decamp from Brussels to its alternative headquarters, in Strasbourg, France, for one week each month. Meanwhile, some of the EU's membership perks, such as free hospital treatment for citizens of any member state anywhere in the EU, go unpublicized by the British press and major parties. "Why did people vote for UKIP in the European election?" asks Nigel Gardner, a pro-integration, Brussels-based political consultant. "Because they saw them as the plucky outsider. People are clearly pissed off with a lot of things that Brussels does. And rightly so."

Ingenious tactician that he is, Blair has sought to neutralize the growing dissent on Europe by executing a screeching U-turn. Despite having previously ruled out a referendum on the new EU constitution, which would bind the continent closer, he has now promised one—but not until after the next election, defusing a potential campaign time bomb. That leaves the already embattled Conservatives, who generally favor less engagement with the EU, to feel the full force of UKIP, as even former Tory Foreign Secretary Sir Malcolm Rifkind concedes. "The more UKIP succeeds, the more damage it will do to the Tories," he told me. "Every UKIP vote is, statistically, a benefit for Labor." Indeed, the right is deadlocked, agrees Philip Norton, a Conservative member of the House of Lords. "The Tories absolutely must regain broad appeal, but then they've got UKIP coming along and siphoning off votes. So you have a problem: How do you keep broad appeal, yet bring UKIP people on board without being seen to going out toward their position?"

To be fair, few expect UKIP to match its 16 percent showing in the European vote in domestic general elections that demand powerful on-the-ground operations. But, if UKIP took 5 percent of the electorate in the next election, it might be enough to wreak havoc on the Tories, potentially relegating them to third-party status, behind the leftist Liberal Democrats.

EVEN WITHOUT UKIP, the Conservative Party, riddled with internecine bickering, would be in a bind. It desperately needs a new direction, but, while it has fired three leaders since Blair's original landslide, it can hardly do the same to its current chief, Michael Howard, so close to an election. The result leaves the prime minister in a bizarre but powerful position: deeply unpopular, yet strangely untouchable. According to one recent poll, 55 percent of British voters think Blair lied about Iraq's WMD, and 56 percent think the war was unjustified. Yet, despite regular newspaper predictions that any given seven days could be Blair's week from hell, the premier barely breaks a sweat. "Even during the most difficult months of this government's life," influential *Observer* columnist Andrew Rawnsley wrote recently, "[the Conservatives] have not managed to establish any meaningful lead in the opinion polls."

Optimistic Tories cling to the hope that UKIP will make them seem moderate by comparison. They pray the upstart party will vanish in a general election "like snow off a dike," as Rifkind puts it. And they even desperately hope that Brussels' cobbled squares and sidewalk cafés may yet cast their spell on Kilroy-Silk. "They want to wreck it, but of course they get completely dragged into the lifestyle [of the European Parliament]," Gardner says. "They have to join committees, they have to join transnational groupings, just to get anything done. I think they may end up getting emasculated, just like everyone else who comes to Brussels" intent on destroying it.

Back in Britain, though, the growth of anti-Europeanism, fueled by an incendiary mix of legitimate criticism and isolationist xenophobia, doesn't seem likely to disappear. In the short term, that means disaster for the Conservatives. In the long term, it can't be good for anyone. ■

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Ashcroft's big mistake.

Prevent Defense

BY JEFFREY ROSEN

THE FBI'S STRATEGIC Information Operations Center, known as SIOC, occupies more than 40,000 square feet on the fifth floor of the Bureau's headquarters in Washington, D.C. It was set up in 1998 as a clearinghouse for intelligence about terrorism collected throughout the federal government, and Attorney General John Ashcroft and FBI Director Robert Mueller camped out here in the weeks following September 11. At the heart of SIOC is the Joint Terrorism Task Force, which operates out of a windowless conference room containing a big-screen television tuned to CNN and several banks of secure computer terminals. Digital clocks display the local time in Riyadh, Baghdad, and Morocco, and there is a poster of a bearded Saddam Hussein, on which someone has scrawled, "Any questions?" While a federal railroad policeman discusses threats over the phone with railroad officials, representatives from the Transportation Security Administration and the Citizenship Immigration Services scan databases for signs of trouble. "This room supports the number-one priority of the FBI, which is the prevention of terrorist acts," Roger Morris, the unit chief, told me. "We're tracking suspicious activity at federal monuments and analyzing the incidents reported by local police."

The Joint Terrorism Task Force represents something of a sea change for the FBI. "We used to wait until the crime is committed. Now we're trying to prevent it before it occurs," Morris explains. The Joint Terrorism Task Force was designed to allow federal officials who had previously been forbidden from talking to one another to exchange intelligence about threats. It is the most visible symbol of the government's effort to address what the 9/11 Commission identified as a critical challenge in the age of terrorism: the need to share more information between law enforcement and intelligence officials.

Since September 11, increased information-sharing has been the first element in the Justice Department's two-pronged strategy to prevent terrorism. The second element involves prosecuting suspicious individuals or groups quickly for low-level crimes rather than waiting years to build a more elaborate case. In many ways, the prevention strategy offers a new twist on an old prosecutorial tactic. Call it the Al Capone approach: Unable to prove that Capone was a mobster, the government prosecuted him for tax evasion instead. Now, the government is using similar tactics to take suspected terrorists off the streets before they can launch an attack.

In principal, the Justice Department's new prevention strategy makes sense. But, in practice, it has had mixed results. Increasing the FBI's ability to engage in domestic surveillance and to share intelligence with domestic and international law enforcement officials has helped identify some terrorist plots before they are hatched, as the recent arrests of suspected Al Qaeda terrorists in Great Britain show. But, since September 11, the Bush administration has also used its new surveillance authority to prosecute or deport hundreds of people who have nothing to do with terrorism. This, in turn, has undermined political support for the war on terrorism in communities where support is crucial. In order to convince Congress to pass the intelligence reforms that the 9/11 Commission recommends—and that both presidential candidates have endorsed—the next president will need to show more restraint. New domestic intelligence powers should be focused exclusively on the investigation of suspected terrorists and not squandered on low-level criminals.

THE 9/11 COMMISSION concluded that the September 11 hijackers were aided by a legal and political culture in Washington that discouraged the sharing of intelligence among the CIA, the FBI, and the Justice Department, each of which was more concerned about protecting its turf than connecting the dots. After September 11, the Bush administration resolved to tear down the wall between intelligence-gathering and law enforcement. On September 21, 2001, John Ashcroft ordered prosecutors to share with the FBI, the CIA, and other federal agencies any information that might "increase the possibility that any threatened action can be disrupted or prevented." And provisions of the USA Patriot Act removed some of the legal barriers that had prevented the FBI, the Justice Department, and the CIA from sharing information obtained through domestic and foreign surveillance. At the same time, Ashcroft and Mueller claimed they were reorganizing their departments to focus on the prevention and disruption of terrorism, as opposed to investigation and after-the-fact prosecution.

Although the prevention model has been presented as a revolutionary change, it relies on a technique that prosecutors and FBI agents have long deployed: the Al Capone strategy. "I don't see this as a major paradigm shift; it's just that counterterrorism is our top priority," says Thomas Fuentes, director of the FBI field office in Indianapolis. "Because we were so successful in fighting domestic organized crime, we're now using those same techniques in this arena as well."

If the prevention strategy had been in place prior to September 11, the government might, in theory, have been able to disrupt the Al Qaeda plot. The 9/11 Commission specifically noted the usefulness of detaining dangerous suspects like Zacarias Moussaoui on immigration violations. It also found that, as early as 1999, in their investigation of the USS *Cole* bombing, intelligence agencies detected the travel of

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September 11 hijacker Khalid Al Mihdhar and saw his travel converge with that of another hijacker they could have identified but didn't—Nawaf Al Hazmi. Because the FBI's intelligence agents were confused about the rules governing the sharing of information about Mihdhar, they failed to alert FBI criminal agents who knew about Al Qaeda. Had they done so, the Commission concluded, both Hazmi and Mihdhar could have been held for immigration violations or as material witnesses in the *Cole* bombing case, and further investigation of their travel could have revealed their connections to other hijackers. "The simple fact of their detention" on low-level charges, the Commission noted, "could have derailed the plan."

Since September 11, the Al Capone strategy has worked several times in terrorism cases: In Charlotte, North Carolina, in 2002, for example, members of a Hezbollah cell were convicted not of providing support for terrorists but of smuggling cigarettes to avoid paying state taxes. In a Portland, Oregon, terrorism case, the wife of one of the suspects pled guilty to money-laundering charges in connection with sending her husband cash overseas. These cases show the benefits of the Al Capone strategy: All of the accused were tied closely enough to terrorist activities to be worth getting off the streets by any means necessary.

But the techniques designed to fight organized crime pose new risks when applied to terrorism. Unlike organized crime, where the government has a fairly good idea of who the dangerous individuals are, terrorists are organized less hierarchically and rarely reveal their murderous intentions until it is too late. There is always a danger, therefore, that, in prosecuting individuals for immigration offenses or other low-level crimes, the government may be deporting or detaining people with no connection to terrorism.

Since September 11, this is exactly what has happened. A comprehensive tracking study by Syracuse University in December 2003 found that the Justice Department had overstated the number of terrorism-related convictions by creating a new category after September 11 called "Anti-Terrorism," which includes immigration offenses, identity theft, and drug cases "intended to prevent or disrupt potential or actual terrorist threats where the offense conduct is not obviously a federal crime of terrorism." According to the Syracuse study, only half of the more than 6,400 "terrorist and anti-terrorist" matters referred to prosecutors by investigative agencies in the two years after September 11 involved actual acts of international or domestic terrorism. (Moreover, the median sentence in international terrorism cases won by the Justice Department was only two weeks.)

Prosecutors insist that cracking down on non-terrorists for identity theft or immigration offenses makes it harder for real terrorists to get false identification or to enter the country illegally. "When we go after people for selling false documents, social security fraud, or visa fraud, these are not terrorist cases in the pre–9/11 ... model, but these are people who are weakening our infrastructure ... in ways that make it possible for these plots to occur," says Christopher Wray, the deputy attorney general in charge of the Criminal Division at Justice.

Nevertheless, there are many prosecutions under the Patriot Act and the prevention strategy that have no direct, or even indirect, connection to terrorism. A report by the General Accounting Office found that nearly half of the cases the Department of Justice classified as resulting in "terrorism-related" convictions in 2002 had been misclassified and, in fact, had nothing to do with terrorism. For example, two New Jersey grocery store operators were convicted of accepting boxes of stolen breakfast cereal 16 months before the September 11 hijacking. In a recent Las Vegas case called "Operation G-String," prosecutors invoked the money-laundering provisions of the Patriot Act to investigate alleged payoffs to local politicians from a strip club owner.

What's more, the 9/11 Commission noted that, of the 768 aliens arrested as "special interest detainees" and lawfully held on immigration charges, 531 were deported, 162 were released on bond, and only eight—including Moussaoui—were remanded to the U.S. Marshall Service as terrorism suspects. The Justice Department's inspector general criticized the treatment of the detainees, and other critics of the prevention strategy, such as David Cole of the Georgetown University Law Center, note that, of the nearly 5,000 foreign nationals detained since September 11 on immigration charges, only three were actually charged with any terrorism-related crime. Of those, two were acquitted of terrorism charges in Detroit and the conviction of the third is under a cloud because prosecutors failed to turn over to the defense evidence that a witness lied on the stand. "If you look at the sum total of all these immigration measures that John Ashcroft used since 9/11, you're hard-pressed to find any actual terrorists who have been identified," Cole says.

Defenders of the prevention approach counter that, if you commit a felony, you have no right to complain about being prosecuted. But using the Patriot Act to bring low-level charges in cases that have nothing to do with terrorism unnecessarily alienates local officials and citizens whose support is critical to waging the war on terrorism. In Georgia and Maryland, local police officers have complained that resident aliens now view them as immigration law enforcers and are more reluctant to call the police to report crimes or other suspicious activity. "Enforcing immigration regulations has created an invisible barrier between the police and the people in precisely those communities that need the most interaction," says Dennis Kenney, a professor of criminal justice at John Jay College in New York City. Kenney also notes that the expansion of Patriot Act investigations into areas unconnected to terrorism can produce a political backlash. Kenney describes being at a meeting where federal officials were promoting the Patriot Act to local police.

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"Very politely, the assistant chief from Las Vegas pointed out that, just as he was buying into the Patriot Act and telling his citizens about its value, federal prosecutors began employing their increased authority in run-of-the-mill domestic violence cases and in investigating city officials," Kenney says. "This was seen in the press as an abuse of power—the thing was sold as a way of catching terrorists, but local folks started to see it as a means to catch everyone else."

For this reason, state and local officials seem less enthusiastic about the prevention paradigm than their counterparts in Washington. Four states and nearly 330 local governments have passed resolutions objecting to the Bush administration's use of the Patriot Act and its efforts to enlist local officials in the war on terrorism. For example, the district attorney in Portland, Oregon, insisted that state law banned his city's police from apprehending people who had violated only immigration laws or from collecting information on the political beliefs of citizens, except as part of a criminal investigation. Daniel Richman of Fordham Law School offers a political explanation for this resistance: Local police forces get none of the credit for the success of federal antiterrorism efforts but are blamed for any local excesses. What's more, local law enforcement officials continue to be evaluated on traditional prosecutions rather than on their contributions to a broader intelligence effort.

These problematic incentives also persist at the federal level, where FBI agents are still judged on convictions rather than intelligence successes, a fact that worried the 9/11 Commission. "We are concerned," the Commission noted in its report, "that management in the [FBI] field offices still can allocate people and resources to local concerns that diverge from the national security mission. This system could revert to a focus on lower-priority criminal justice cases over national security requirements." In other words, diverting domestic surveillance to lower-level crimes is bad terrorism policy as well as bad politics.

The 9/11 Commission concluded that waging an effective war on terrorism will require renewing some of the Patriot Act provisions that are due to expire and also on consolidating authority for information collection and dissemination under a single national intelligence director. But, despite the endorsements of President Bush and John Kerry, its recommendations are being resisted not only by turf-conscious federal bureaucrats but also by the libertarian conservatives and civil libertarian liberals in Congress. These congressional skeptics came within one vote on July 8 of repealing Section 215 of the Patriot Act, which gives government broad authority to search libraries, businesses, and medical records. In order to alleviate the libertarians' legitimate fears, the next president, whoever he is, will have to take a less polarizing approach than Bush has so far. Intelligence analysts need to cooperate with law enforcement officials. But the president needs to emphasize that broad surveillance authority will only be used against suspected terrorists, not ordinary suspects. By doing so, he could reassure critics and make America safer at the same time. ■

Would Reagan recognize the GOP?

Freed Radicals

BY JOHN B. JUDIS

"THE PARTY OF George W. Bush is very much the party of Ronald Reagan," declared Ed Gillespie, the chairman of the Republican Party, in September 2003. It's a contention that one speaker after another will echo at the Republican National Convention. But they will be largely wrong. While there is continuity between the Reagan and Bush GOPs—as evidenced by Bush's tax cuts, for example—the outward similarities conceal a deeper truth: Bush's Republican Party is far more conservative than Reagan's ever was.

U.S. political parties are not like tightly organized European parties. They contain different levels of formal and informal leadership and membership—ranging from elected politicians to local and state party officials to partisan interest groups to core voters. On each of these levels, the party that will gather in New York City to renominate Bush is different from that of Reagan. In Reagan's party, moderates, and even liberals, retained a strong voice; in Bush's, they are barely audible. In Reagan's party, conservatives complained of being ignored, and the religious right was shut out of the party establishment; in Bush's party, conservatives and the Christian Right no longer grumble. That's because, today, they *are* the Republican Party.

REAGAN'S GOP BROUGHT together Sun Belt conservatives, such as Arizona Senator Barry Goldwater, who were hostile to labor unions and the New Deal but who also opposed government interference in citizens' lives; Deep South conservatives, such as Strom Thurmond, who had turned Republican when the Democrats backed racial desegregation; a large group of moderates or "Old Guard" Republicans, such as Kansas Senator Robert Dole, who supported the New Deal but worried about budget deficits and welfare and who, unlike the Deep South Republicans, still identified themselves as members of the party of Lincoln; and a few Northeastern liberals, such as Pennsylvania Senator John Heinz.

This diversity was reflected in Reagan's administration, but his White House was actually dominated by moderates. These included Vice President George H.W. Bush, who had criticized Reagan's "voodoo economics"; White House Chief of Staff James Baker, who had run Gerald Ford's and Bush's primary campaigns against Reagan; and others like Treasury Secretary Donald Regan and Secretary of State George Shultz. The most extreme Cabinet officials, such as Interior Secretary James Watt, a fundamentalist who want-

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Immigration Amnesty Deal Would Bring Runaway U.S. Population Growth

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The president's January 7th offer of amnesty to illegal aliens and guest worker status to millions more abroad will stoke America's already high population growth, with tragic consequences for our environment and resources.

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ed to hand over the wilderness to energy and timber interests, were forced to resign. Republicans in Congress were even more centrist. They were led by Dole, who advocated a tax increase in 1982 to keep the deficit under control; Tennessee Senator Howard Baker, who was reviled by conservatives for his support of the Panama Canal treaty; and Illinois Representative Robert Michel, whom *The Washington Post* described as an advocate of "consensus-oriented, non-ideological politics."

Today's Congress, by contrast, is dominated by hard-line conservatives. Texas Representative Tom DeLay, now the majority leader, has virtually run the House of Representatives since Newt Gingrich resigned six years ago. DeLay, Speaker Dennis Hastert, and Majority Whip Roy Blount all boast 90-plus percent ratings on the American Conservative Union and Christian Coalition scorecards, as do all seven of the GOP's elected Senate leaders, from Majority Leader Bill Frist and Senate Majority Whip Mitch McConnell to Chief Deputy Majority Whip Bob Bennett and Policy Committee Chairman Jon Kyl.

Bush's administration reflects this conservative predominance. The most influential members are White House political adviser Karl Rove, Vice President Dick Cheney, Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld, and Attorney General John Ashcroft. The administration's most notable moderate, Secretary of State Colin Powell, has been marginalized, and will be conspicuously absent from this year's convention (see Notebook, page 10). Its two other well-known moderates, former Treasury Secretary Paul O'Neill and former Environmental Protection Agency Administrator Christie Whitman, have resigned.

THE MAIN REASON for this post-Reagan shift to the right is that the party's geographical and political base changed with the 1994 election. Reagan's Republican Party was based in the Sun Belt and the traditionally Republican Great Plains states, but it also commanded support in the rest of the country. Between the 1980 and 1984 elections, Reagan won every state in the far West, Midwest, and Northeast twice except for Minnesota, Maryland, Rhode Island, and West Virginia. But, after Reagan's two terms and George H.W. Bush's one, the GOP lost its hold on the far West and Northeast and even parts of the Southern periphery, including Florida. In the last three presidential elections, it hasn't won a single state on the West Coast, and it has lost every Northeastern state except New Hampshire (which it won in 2000 thanks to Ralph Nader).

As Republicans faltered in the far West, the Northeast, and the Midwest, they became more dependent on their growing support in the Deep South. Bush won the 2000 election because he carried the entire South against Al Gore. Indeed, the GOP congressional majority that emerged in 1994 was the culmination of the South's transformation from conservative Democratic politics to conservative Republican politics. Since 1994, Republicans have continued to gain seats in the South while losing them in the rest of the country. In 2000, the Republicans' eleven-seat advantage in the House was due to an 18-seat advantage in Southern seats that made up for a seven-seat deficit in the rest of the country. In 2002, the Republicans' larger 23-seat margin was due to a surplus of 29 seats in the South.

As Republicans have become more dependent on the South for victories, Southern Republicans, including Bush, Gingrich, DeLay, Frist, Dick Armey, and Trent Lott, have become the party's leaders (see Michael Lind, "The Southern Coup," June 19, 1995). And these Southerners have shaped Republican politics to reflect the South's racially tinged blend of economic individualism and social conservatism. In the South, white working-class and middle-class Southerners are often as disdainful of government as the pro-business upper classes. Southern working-class whites used to back the New Deal but turned against government in the 1960s, when they began to identify it with handouts to minorities. In *Politics and Society in the South*, political scientists Earl Black and Merle Black write, "Many white southerners perceived themselves as being forced to contribute, against their convictions and desires, to programs for which blacks were highly visible beneficiaries." Religion, too, has led Southerners to the conservative fold, as working-class Christian fundamentalists, who, in other areas of the country, might be economic liberals or populists, support tax cuts and government-spending reductions.

This Southern conservatism now broadly defines Republican conservatism. It is different from Goldwater's Sun Belt libertarianism, with its emphasis on personal freedom, that was so important to the Reagan coalition and that still accounts for some of the appeal of California's tabloid governor, Arnold Schwarzenegger, and Arizona's maverick senator, John McCain. The Deep South's libertarianism is entirely economic. Its social outlook, by contrast, is deeply intolerant and underlain by a history of racism. This unsavory aspect of Southern white politics is often hidden but has recently come to the fore in rural white voters' support for Confederate symbols. (In Georgia's 2002 gubernatorial election, for example, Republican Sonny Perdue and party chairman and former Christian Coalition President Ralph Reed used the Confederate flag to curry rural white support against Democratic incumbent Roy Barnes.)

Southern conservatism also has little of the small-business, anti-corporate, anti–Wall Street populism of Western and even Great Plains conservatism. Southern whites *like* big business, and Southern white Republicans have no hesitation about identifying their party's cause with corporate America. (According to Merle Black, the extensive election surveys conducted by the Center for Political Studies from 1994 to 2000 show that 63 percent of white Southerners who graduated or attended college were "warm" toward "big business," and only 21 percent were "cool.") Republican conservatives from the right-to-work South display none of the lingering support for unions and the New Deal that can be found among North-

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ern Republicans. Former *Wall Street Journal* columnist Jude Wanniski, who advised Reagan on supply-side economics, describes Gingrich and the conservatives who took power in 1994 as wanting to "unwind the New Deal."

THIS MOVE TOWARD Southern conservatism opened the door to right-wing political and religious organizations that had previously functioned outside, rather than inside, the Republican party. During the Reagan years, the conservative movement was dominated by the Heritage Foundation in Washington and by a group of new-right political committees housed in Northern Virginia. These conservatives influenced the administration and the Republican Party. But they weren't part of either. Conservatives backed Reagan when Democrats attacked his tax program or his opposition to a nuclear freeze with the Soviet Union, but they criticized him vigorously for refusing to make banning abortion a priority and for agreeing in 1982 to Dole's proposal to raise taxes in order to forestall huge deficits. "In terms of having any real influence with the Reagan administration, we just haven't had any," complained Howard Phillips, head of the Conservative Caucus, in Reagan's first year. "All they've done is throw us a few bones to keep the dogs from biting their heels." Two years later, conservative journalist M. Stanton Evans lamented in a speech at the annual Conservative Political Action Conference (CPAC), "There has been no Reagan revolution in Washington."

The religious right—represented by the Reverend Jerry Falwell's Moral Majority and Liberty Federation and by the Reverend Pat Robertson's Freedom Council—operated even further outside the Republican establishment. Across the country, Christian activists fought pitched battles with party stalwarts who, committed to an older, more moderate Republicanism of balanced budgets and small-business loans, wanted to prevent them from controlling or even participating in party organizations. When a Falwell protégé won a Republican congressional primary in Muncie, Indiana, in 1986, the GOP's county chairman warned, "If the Christian right becomes a major portion of the [Republican] voting bloc, then it has the potential to destroy it. We would lose our centrist base."

Over the last decade, however, spurred by the Republican takeover of Congress and the triumph of Southern Republicanism, conservatives and religious fundamentalists have become players in the Republican Party. Conservative think tanks and organizations are less visible than they were in the '80s, but many of their analysts and operatives now work directly for the GOP, Republican members of Congress, or the Bush administration. Today, the Heritage Foundation has a lower profile, but that's not because Republicans have moved away from its ideas; it's because they have embraced them. Many of the people who, under Reagan and Bush I, would have worked for Heritage are employed as Republican congressional staffers. Says Grover Norquist, the president of Americans for Tax Reform and a leader of the conservative movement, "Heritage is dwarfed by the number of full policy guys in the House and Senate who put out right-of-center analysis."

The Christian Right retains a separate identity but has been integrated into national and state Republican activity nevertheless, in part because Rove has made it a priority to maintain contact with the movement. One of his top deputies, Timothy Goeglein, a former aide to Gary Bauer at the Family Research Council, serves as the administration's daily liaison to conservative Christians, and Reed actually works for the Bush campaign. In the House, Christian groups can look to DeLay as a reliable ally, in a way they could never have looked to Michel. And, according to University of Akron political scientist John C. Green and Iowa State University's Kimberly Conger, Christian conservatives have a significant presence in 44 Republican state party organizations, and they control the balance of power in 18.

What's more, over the past decade, Christian and conservative groups have learned to better coordinate their activities. In the Reagan years, much of the conservative movement met annually in Washington for the CPAC meeting. But, outside of that, few of the groups worked actively with each other. The Moral Majority had no dealings with the National Rifle Association. Anti-abortion groups had no ties to trade organizations. And the main business lobbies in Washington remained studiously nonpartisan.

In the early '90s, however, Norquist took the lead in combining these organizations into a functional coalition. In 1993, he brought together representatives of anti-tax, property rights, Second Amendment, Christian conservative, and other groups that wanted to see the Clinton administration fail. Norquist initially called the assemblage, which met monthly to plan strategy, the "leave-it-alone" coalition. Later, it became the "center-right coalition." With the Republican capture of Congress in 1994, Norquist, working closely with Gingrich, Armey, and DeLay, pressured the Chamber of Commerce and the National Federation of Independent Business to send representatives to the meetings. Norquist's coalition has now grown to several hundred groups and meets separately in 46 states, as well as in Washington. Goeglein regularly attends the meetings on the White House's behalf. Says journalist Lee Edwards, a senior fellow at the Heritage Foundation, "The Grover Norquist meeting is very representative of the Republican party and the conservative movement. You have Republican party people, but you also have dozens and dozens of organizations, which all get a place at the table."

Norquist's coalition represents the triumph of Southern conservative ideology. The participants at the meetings combine the economic individualism of the property rights and anti-tax movements with the social conservatism of the religious right. "He has been very successful at uniting these different wings," says Mark Bloomfield, the president of the American Council for Capital Formation.

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THE NEW REPUBLICAN coalition has the advantage of being far more cohesive than the assemblage that supported Reagan. Reagan's electoral coalition consisted of seemingly incompatible constituencies—pro-choice suburbanites from New Jersey alongside small-town fundamentalists from Alabama, anti-communist Chinese-Americans from California alongside nativist white North Carolinians. By contrast, the Bush coalition brooks few such contradictions either in its base or in its supporting organizations. Bush's conservative backing—and his Republican support generally—has remained remarkably solid, even as self-identified independents have deserted him. In a CBS poll last February, 90 percent of Republican voters supported Bush, and he bested Kerry among independents by 46 to 43 percent. By early August, Bush had fallen behind Kerry among independents by 35 to 52 percent, but he was still backed by 88 percent of Republicans.

Yet, there are disadvantages to Bush's tightly knit conservative coalition. Electoral majorities—from William McKinley's in 1896 to Franklin Roosevelt's in 1932 to Reagan's in 1980—have always, by necessity, been socially and politically heterogeneous. McKinley drew together Northern labor and capital; Roosevelt combined the urban North and the rural South. The new Republican conservative coalition, however, achieves homogeneity at the expense of majority support. America is not Cobb County, Georgia, or Midland, Texas, writ large. Most Americans don't think government should be dismantled and abortion outlawed. They don't want creationism taught in schools or environmental regulations gutted.

And, because of that, the Republican Party's very success has put it at risk. Though its rebirth as a Southern-based conservative party allowed it to capture the White House and Congress, it also hindered it from building a stable national political majority. In the 2000 election, Bush and Rove clearly recognized the limitation of the Republican base and attempted to reach beyond it by advocating "compassionate conservatism." They hinted at tough measures to curb HMOs. They muted Bush's stands on abortion and even gay rights. And the strategy worked, gaining Bush enough support among independents and Democrats to carry a middle-of-the-road state like Missouri.

This year, Bush and Rove face the same daunting task. They need to get their base to the polls, but they also need to capture swing votes. That has become increasingly difficult, as continued fighting in Iraq has diminished Bush's appeal as a war president and the deficits created by tax cuts have ruled out new spending proposals. Still, Bush and Rove will try. During the Republican convention, they plan to spotlight moderates and mavericks like Schwarzenegger, McCain, and New York Governor George Pataki. Bush is also working on a set of proposals that will reportedly refurbish his image as a compassionate conservative. If he succeeds, he will probably be reelected. But, if he fails, the seeds of failure planted in the election of 1994 and in the transformation of the Republican Party will have finally taken root. ■

How McCain sold out.

Opportunism Knocks

BY FRANKLIN FOER

TO GRASP THE strangeness of the current rapprochement between President George W. Bush and Senator John McCain, you need to understand the saga of John Weaver, the political operative who brokered the peace. Long before many Democrats became Bush haters, Weaver was already there. As a chief strategist for John McCain's 2000 presidential campaign, he bore witness to the carnage of the primary in South Carolina, where Bush campaign proxies spread spurious rumors about their rival's venereal diseases, treasonous wartime behavior, and the black child he sired with a prostitute. That experience alone might have been enough to drive Weaver from the Republican Party. But the Bushies—and especially Karl Rove, whose rivalry with Weaver dated back to their early careers in Texas—took all the steps necessary to seal the deal. At the direction of the White House, GOP campaign contracts stopped coming Weaver's way. In one widely reported instance, Rove allegedly prevented Weaver from joining Alabama Senator Jeff Sessions's reelection campaign. Things got so bad for Weaver that McCain told talk-show host Don Imus in March 2002, "John was made unwelcome in the Republican Party. He does have a right to make a living."

In early 2002, Weaver reregistered as a Democrat. And even that doesn't do justice to his alienation. Soon after crossing the aisle, he signed contracts with the Association of Trial Lawyers of America and the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee (DCCC)—two organizations deeply committed to the defeat of Republican candidates. He joined the inner circle of consultants planning Dick Gephardt's presidential campaign. (Had he not developed cancer, he would have likely remained active in that campaign.) And, to almost any reporter who called, he articulated a stinging critique of the Bushies.

So, the fact that he agreed to sit down for coffee with

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Rove later this spring was, itself, a shocking turn of events. The results of their meeting are even harder to assimilate. Not only has Weaver helped arrange a series of Bush-McCain appearances—including two days of joint campaigning planned for the middle of the Republican National Convention—but he has also become a primary liaison between the two camps.

This détente is, of course, a kick in the gut for McCain's Democratic admirers, many of whom hoped the senator's persistent criticism of the administration could become a weapon for John Kerry in his run against Bush—or that McCain might even be persuaded to join Kerry in a kind of national unity ticket. When the senator's advisers encounter such Democratic disappointment, they answer it with bemusement. "You forgot he was a Republican," says one, chuckling to himself. Indeed, McCain has strongly supported the war in Iraq and the hawkish thrust of Bush foreign policy. But, given that McCain had bucked his party's line on seemingly every important piece of domestic policy from tax cuts to health care to stem cells to global warming, it was an understandable lapse. What Democrats also forgot was that McCain is an ambitious, self-interested politician. His new relationship with Bush is simply a recalculation of that self-interest.

WHEN MCCAIN FIRST learned of Bush's desire to campaign with him, he joked to aides, "I guess that means they're desperate." But, by appealing to McCain for help, the White House wasn't so much flailing as filling a need. Polling showed that the Republican base had rallied to the president's side in unprecedented fashion. But Bush had begun hemorrhaging independents in the process. By the middle of the summer, a CBS poll showed Kerry leading by 17 points with these voters—even though they had evenly divided their allegiances three months earlier. Because independents were responsible for McCain's against-the-odds victories in the 2000 New Hampshire and Michigan primaries, many pundits and strategists have ascribed McCain an iconic standing with this group. (In part, the DCCC hired Weaver to explain McCain's method of wooing this set.) And the data largely supported this conventional wisdom. When pollsters tested a Kerry-McCain ticket, the Democratic candidate suddenly gained a 14-point advantage.

DORIT RABINOVITCH

The McCain camp must have experienced more than a little schadenfreude at Rove's sudden solicitation of Weaver. After all, it wasn't just Weaver whom Rove had treated shabbily. In 2001, pro-Bush forces in New Hampshire campaigned to recall two Republican National Committee members who had backed McCain. Others found their applications for administration jobs rejected. This vendetta infected the entire legislative process. Except in passing the Iraq war resolution, the White House never called McCain for help—and, even then, the president worked largely through senators and other proxies to communicate with McCain's office.

McCain liked that the White House was suddenly groveling for his help. "You'll never hear him say it, but there's a lot of satisfaction for John McCain in knowing how badly George Bush needs him," speculates Dan Schnur, communications director of McCain's 2000 campaign. From the start of the administration, Rove had suggested that elections could be won by turning out the party's conservative base. By employing McCain to woo swing voters, Rove essentially conceded the hollowness of his strategy, and that provided its own emotional satisfaction.

But ultimately, the McCain-Bush rapprochement has less to do with McCain's ego than with his political ambitions. McCainiacs like to joke about how they run an improvisational operation devoid of long-term planning. "When you expect them to zig, they zag," says one Democrat who has worked closely with McCain's Senate office. "They don't seem to always know where they're going." But they do have one guiding star: The White House, a prize that still holds their interest and has directly entered into their calculus. (McCain would be 72 on Election Day, 2008.)

That calculus is complicated and requires explanation. For most of the Bush administration, McCain seemed to have grown so alienated from his party that he would never have a prayer of winning its nomination. At some moments, it looked like he might follow Weaver into the Democratic Party and pursue the presidency from there. (Three years ago, McCainologists read great significance into a weekend spent with Tom Daschle at McCain's Sedona cabin.) And, at other times, he has looked prone to launch a third party candidacy. In 2001, Weaver, *Weekly Standard* editor Bill Kristol, and other advisers met at Bacchus Restaurant in Dupont Circle to discuss such a bid.

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But neither option ever gained much traction. According to aides, McCain never seriously entertained the idea of becoming a Democrat. It was always a third party run—the same path taken by his idol, Theodore Roosevelt, in 1912—that piqued his interest. But, when McCain's advisers tried to imagine scenarios for such a candidacy, they kept encountering severe obstacles. Most concluded that the two-party system is too entrenched to be effectively challenged. And, with the nation increasingly polarized by Bush, the zeitgeist seemed unsuited to a new party. "They have decided that their only hope is to burnish their Republican credentials," says one operative close to McCain.

Of course, there's one major problem with this strategy: McCain's pursuit of campaign finance reform turned him into a pariah among Republicans. During the fall of 2001, a meeting of House Republicans broke into boos at the mere mention of his name. As Grover Norquist summed up the GOP's thinking to *The Washington Post* that June, "He is not drifting right. He is not drifting left. He is drifting in front of the television cameras." That's why the appearances with Bush are considered so necessary. Schnur argues, "Nobody is going to say that John McCain didn't do everything he could to help him. Even if that doesn't ultimately play into a 2008 discussion, it ought to give him points for loyalty."

FOR ALL THIS speculation, McCain hasn't dropped many hints that help resolve the riddle of his reconciliation with Bush. Since hitting the trail with the president, he has uncharacteristically refrained from freewheeling sessions with reporters, while going out of his way to highlight the fact that he isn't completely on board, as he did earlier this month with his criticisms of Bush's plan for redeploying troops based in South Korea. And that's only the beginning of the mixed signals. While Weaver and Rove hammered out the details of their bosses' alliance, McCain strung John Kerry along, leaving open the possibility that he might accept the vice-presidential nomination. (According to one report in the *Los Angeles Times*, Kerry and McCain had seven conversations about the subject. A McCain adviser said that it was more like two.) And in May, he appeared on "The Daily Show" to ridicule the administration and flaunt his independence.

In the absence of a convincing explanation of his motives, the press has resorted to analyzing McCain's body language. Last week, *The New York Times* ran four stop-action photos that documented a bear hug between McCain and his old foe. On their own, the pictures yielded an array of comically awkward images. But the *Times* neglected to provide an essential piece of context: The bear hug was a carefully choreographed maneuver, a corrective for one of Bush's past faux pas. During the 2000 campaigns, Bush and McCain's interactions weren't just politically awkward, they were physically painful. At the GOP convention, with balloons falling from the ceiling of Philadelphia's First Union Center, Bush lifted McCain's arm in the time-honored tradition. Unfortunately, McCain's experience in the Hanoi Hilton prevents him from executing this motion without excruciating jolts pulsing through his nerves. McCainiacs have long remembered this moment as a symbol of Bush's wretched treatment of their hero. As they recall the tableau, McCain, gritting his teeth, muttered to Bush, "It doesn't go there." Apparently, now it does. ■

How Giuliani sold out.

Profit Sharing

BY MICHAEL CROWLEY

THE SCENE HAS unfolded at least a dozen times over the past year. In some huge sports arena in a large U.S. city, a second-tier pop singer performs a series of patriotic anthems. After a pause, a burst of horns and the gossamer voice of Frank Sinatra fills the stadium. *Start spreading the news* ... A maelstrom of red, white, and blue confetti fills the air. Now, a roar surges through the crowd—Rudolph Giuliani has come into view. The standing ovation that greets him might last for a full minute before Giuliani finally cuts it off. After all, these people have paid good money ($225 at the door, $49 in advance) to hear him speak. Not just him, actually: At these "Get Motivated!" seminars, sponsored by a Tampa-based motivational speaker named Peter Lowe, a constellation of stars are on hand—Private Jessica Lynch! Zig Ziglar! Larry King! Goldie Hawn! Jerry Lewis! But no one is a bigger draw than America's mayor, the hero of September 11. As for Giuliani, he's come here (to Cleveland or Baltimore or San Francisco or any of the other cities visited by the Get Motivated! tour) to share his insights on "How to Lead in Difficult Times." This amounts to six principles: stick to core beliefs, optimism, courage, relentless preparation, humility and teamwork, and good communication. "It's not magic," Giuliani might tell his audience, as he did at Tropicana Field in St. Petersburg, Florida, last year. No kidding.

If you've been wondering what Rudy Giuliani has been up to since leaving the New York City mayor's office in early 2002, here's one answer: cashing in. In addition to dispensing

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his wisdom on the Get Motivated! tour, he has earned millions working the lecture circuit, hawking a quickie book, and running a lucrative consulting practice favored by big companies facing richly deserved p.r. problems.

But Giuliani has played his September 11 glory for more than financial gain. He's also turning a healthy political profit. On September 10, 2001, remember, Giuliani was a largely spent force. He had bailed out of a Senate race against Hillary Clinton after being diagnosed with prostate cancer. He had concluded a messy breakup with his wife. A series of police brutality scandals had tarnished his crime-fighting accomplishments. And, given his uneasy relations with state and national GOP leaders—who saw him as disloyal and too liberal—no one was coming to rescue him.

Then came September 11, which, by turning him into a beloved political celebrity, marked a new beginning for Giuliani's career. Since that day, he has become one of the GOP's most loyal and valuable foot soldiers. Gone is the unpredictable, independent thinker, replaced by a campaign attack dog who dutifully recites GOP talking points and seems happy to endorse anyone with a pulse and an "R" after his name. And, while George W. Bush's presidency has ostracized GOP moderates in Washington, Giuliani will celebrate the president with a prime-time address at next week's Republican convention in New York. Bush, he insists, "will, in history, be one of our great presidents." What Giuliani doesn't say is that he may think the same thing about himself.

BEFORE GIULIANI COULD concentrate on his return to politics, he had to focus on getting rich—fast. Within a year, he cranked out *Leadership*, a memoir and self-help hybrid that promises to demonstrate "how the leadership skills he practices can be employed successfully by anyone who has to run anything." He hit the lecture circuit, giving speeches to trade associations for $100,000 a pop (according to his 2002 divorce papers, he expected to garner about $8 million in annual speaking fees). But the really big money flows from Giuliani Partners, a consulting firm he opened in 2002 with a crew of former city government officials. Giuliani doesn't seem too choosy about his clients, which range from the National Thoroughbred Racing Association to a California-based company that specializes in the sale of low-priced wills and divorce papers. And, although Giuliani made his name in part by fighting Wall Street corruption in the 1980s, he was all too happy to help Merrill Lynch "negotiate" with New York Attorney General Eliot Spitzer in 2002 when Merrill was under investigation for letting investment-banking relationships taint its stock research.

DORIT RABINOVITCH

There's little secret as to why such firms would want Giuliani on their payroll. Consider his work for Purdue Pharma, the maker of the painkiller OxyContin. In 2002, OxyContin—a cash cow for Purdue—was facing stricter federal regulation after reports that its misuse as a narcotic had led to more than 400 deaths. As detailed by *The New York Times*' Eric Lipton earlier this year, in March 2002, a Purdue spokesman told a group of p.r. executives that the company "had to switch over to using more political consultants" and was about to hire "a sort of rock star in that area." Soon after, Purdue retained Giuliani Partners. "We believe that government officials are more comfortable knowing that Giuliani is advising Purdue Pharma," the company's lawyer later said in a statement. A similar rationale was no doubt behind the recent decision of PHRMA—the national pharmaceutical trade association—to hire Giuliani's firm to prepare a report on the safety of reimported prescription drugs, at a time when the industry is desperately trying to kill reimportation legislation. That Giuliani has no particular expertise on the subject seems not to matter. "Folks on both sides of the aisle respect him for his leadership," a PHRMA spokesman told *Newsday* earlier this month.

And, while security consulting is a central focus of Giuliani Partners, one wonders about its credentials there, too. Though conscious of terrorism before September 11, Giuliani was hardly the Richard Clarke of Manhattan. Despite the 1993 bombing, he failed to foresee that the World Trade Center complex might not be the ideal location to build a new city government emergency-command bunker. Nor did he make sure police and firefighter radios could communicate with one another—a tragic footnote to September 11 that led Republican 9/11 Commission member John Lehman to blast the city's command-and-control system as "a scandal" and "not worthy of the Boy Scouts."

Giuliani's political sellout is even more striking than his financial one. It began on September 14, 2001, when Giuliani and Bush met for the first time after the Twin Towers fell. Just a few days earlier, such an encounter might have been awkward: Giuliani was never a Bush loyalist. He'd flirted

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heavily with John McCain's insurgent candidacy before officially endorsing Bush, and, even then, he backed McCain's struggle to get on the New York state primary ballot. And, when Bush supporters launched a malicious attack against McCain's record on funding for breast cancer research, Giuliani was "asked to join in the criticism," he writes in *Leadership*. He demurred. Given the primacy Bush's circle places on fidelity, such insubordination did not go unnoticed. "For a while some of the Bush people were suspicious of me," Giuliani recounts.

In fact, it wasn't a given that Giuliani would endorse a Republican in 2000 at all. As a candidate for New York City mayor in 1993, Giuliani had openly touted his liberal views on abortion, guns, and gay rights. In his first term he worked closely with Bill Clinton on federal crime and welfare legislation and with Governor Mario Cuomo on state budgetary aid for the city. He was so enamored with Cuomo, in fact, that he endorsed the governor for reelection in 1994 over Republican George Pataki—to the fury of GOP leaders. "He was not a loyal Republican in any sense," says a senior aide to one New York state Republican. Adds Peter Vallone, a former Democratic speaker of the New York City Council who got along famously with Giuliani, "The Republican leadership in New York state would have loved to see him disappear." Giuliani grew slightly more antagonistic toward Democrats in his second term—which, thanks to term limits, was his last—as he began contemplating broader horizons like a run for Senate or governor that would require support from upstate conservatives. But even then, says Fred Siegel, a senior fellow at the Progressive Policy Institute and author of a forthcoming book on Giuliani, "he wasn't terribly partisan."

But, when Bush and Giuliani met at a New Jersey Air Force base and then toured the ruins of Ground Zero, any tension between them seemed to vanish. "I have seen Air Force One at other times," Giuliani recounts in *Leadership*, "but as I watched President Bush exit that plane on that day it was hard to contain my tears of relief. I thanked him and told him how proud I was of how he was handling the country in this crisis." Bush asked Giuliani what he could do for him. "If you catch this guy, bin Laden, I would like to be the one to execute him," Giuliani replied. "I am sure he thought I was just speaking rhetorically," he writes, "but I was serious."

In their shared thirst for vengeance, Bush and Giuliani finally connected and realized they could have a mutually beneficial relationship. By this point, after all, Giuliani was at least as popular as Bush. "The messianic hero met his moment in history," says Mark Green, who, as New York public advocate, was a longtime Giuliani adversary. "He became an apparent hero with a real villain. He was calm and sincere when Bush was flying around in circles. I watched him go from Nixon to Churchill within a twenty-four-hour period."

With the 2002 midterm elections coming, Republicans were eager to tap Giuliani's popularity. And Giuliani was happy to let them. He filmed commercials for 24 GOP candidates and took more than 30 political trips on their behalf. Doing so required brushing aside his ideological differences with social conservatives like Jim Talent of Missouri and even paleocon Bob Smith of New Hampshire. Similarly, Bush is now using Giuliani to bolster his own reelection campaign. Giuliani was part of a GOP team dispatched to Boston during the Democratic convention to take potshots at John Kerry, whom he mocked as "an indecisive candidate with an inconsistent position on the war on terror." This week, Bush and Giuliani planned to campaign together in New Mexico before Giuliani's prime-time address at the GOP convention.

GIULIANI'S SERVICE TO the party is not purely altruistic, of course. There is talk of his statewide ambitions and his potential interest in a second-term Bush Cabinet position (either attorney general or Homeland Security secretary). But many Republicans and Democrats, in both New York and in Washington, believe he intends to run for the White House in 2008. "Everyone who knows him comes back to me and says, 'He doesn't want to be governor, he wants to run for president,'" says a prominent New York Democratic fund-raiser. Cast through that prism, his surprisingly dutiful efforts for the party make perfect sense: His 2002 campaigning included convenient stops in Iowa and New Hampshire. His convention appearance, meanwhile, will be the most powerful reminder to date of his September 11 performance.

Loyalty, however, will only get Giuliani so far. As the New York fund-raiser puts it: "The question is, how does someone who is pro–gun control, pro-choice, pro–gay rights—and dresses in drag on occasion [at annual New York political comedy dinners]—run as a Republican?" The answer goes back to September 11. Thanks to his extreme hawkishness on terrorism and security, Giuliani doesn't sound like a moderate. In a May appearance at the Council on Foreign Relations, for instance, Giuliani appeared as strident as Bush: defending the war in Iraq, backing renewal of the USA Patriot Act, downplaying the Abu Ghraib prison scandal, and calling for democratization of the Middle East. This focus on foreign affairs allows Giuliani to mask his social liberalism. Asked on ABC in 2002 about his support for socially conservative candidates, Giuliani had a ready answer: "Well, they agree with me on some big issues," like Iraq and the Homeland Security Department.

It may be that Giuliani's metamorphosis is an authentic one, that he was radicalized by September 11 and driven deep into a partisan bunker. But Giuliani may also realize his best hope for a future in today's Republican Party flows from his September 11 stature and his militant attitude toward the war on terrorism. In today's GOP, the word "moderate" is typically used to describe someone with liberal social views. But, as national politics realigns around foreign policy, it could be that socially conservative internationalists like Chuck Hagel—another 2008 hopeful—become the moderates, while hawks like Giuliani overcome their social liberalism with unflinching rhetoric on the war on terrorism. For Giuliani, it is a gamble worth taking. And, if he's wrong, he can always go back to getting rich. ■

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My name is George Rayburn. I am Dr. Sjuggerud's Publisher.

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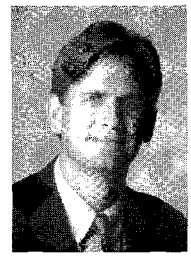

Dr. Steve Sjuggerud PhD

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BOOKS & THE ARTS

STANLEY KAUFFMANN ON FILMS

Jewish Fates

THE GERMAN DIRECTOR Margarethe von Trotta makes me a little sad. This may be my own fault because of unrealistic expectations; nonetheless it was von Trotta who caused them. After an acting career that was merely adequate, she became a director and, along with Wim Wenders and Werner Herzog, was prominent in the New German Cinema that surged in the 1970s. The others have faded; von Trotta at least still is present. Her second and third films deserved places, in my view, in the world's choice store. *Sisters* is in a sense a cinematic realization of the music with which it begins, the Lament from Purcell's *Dido and Aeneas*, as it follows the travails of a shadowed young woman. *Marianne and Julianne* is the best film I know about the liberal dilemma: a liberal woman who has an activist sister is divided, but also not divided, from that sister because of the latter's political violence. It is a deep and searching work.

ROSENSTRASSE
(Samuel Goldwyn)

ALMOST PEACEFUL
(Empire)

These two early wonderful films raised hopes for one of the world's premier film careers, and von Trotta's subsequent film, *Rosa Luxemburg*, though it devolved into a series of speeches, was so marvelously made that it fed those hopes. I took it to be a secondary work by a major director. But the films of hers that I have seen since then, though certainly not barren, seemed even lesser—descents from the two splendid films that she had once made.

Von Trotta's new film, **ROSENSTRASSE**, is another of the same: not barren, but a poignant reminder of past wonders. From the opening moments, the clarity and the control of movement are in themselves impressive, and they never falter. The actors understand completely why they are there. The editing, complex because of several time strands, is more than skillful. But the screenplay by von Trotta and Pamela Katz suborns its subject.

The base of the story is factual. In late February and early March of 1943, five thousand Berlin Jews were rounded up by the SS, and some of them were interned in a former Jewish welfare center in the Rosenstrasse. They were destined for Auschwitz. Many of the interned Jews had non-Jewish wives—Aryan, as the tag went—and dozens of those wives soon gathered in the street outside the center to protest. One estimate says that the crowd reached a thousand. This open protest, in the heart of the Nazi capital, persisted for several days, and finally Goebbels decided to quash the problem, without the threatened gunfire, by sending some of the Jews to labor camps instead of Auschwitz and by returning some to their wives. (The future of those returnees is not part of the story.)

These facts are in the film, but they are swathed in intricate fiction. The film begins in the relatively recent present, in a New York apartment where a Jewish widow is mourning her lately deceased husband. (The widow is played by Jutta Lampe, who was in von Trotta's two best films.) The mourning is being done in strict Orthodox manner with mirrors covered, shoes off, and so on. The dead man had not been particularly religious: this orthodoxy is the widow's idea. It turns out—things keep turning out—that this Jewish widow was a child in that Rosenstrasse crowd, bereft of parents, and was taken in by an Aryan woman who raised her. The widow has a daughter who is engaged to a non-Jew, though her mother disapproves. Spurred by her mother's new orthodoxy and eager to get the truth of her mother's past—also spurred by the objections to her fiancé—the daughter goes to Berlin to seek out that now-aged Aryan protester and protector. The old lady is helpful: she tells the young woman much. Among other matters, the old lady (it turns out!) is a baroness, which helped her at the time of the protest to meet Goebbels and to use her womanliness to sway him. Von Trotta is always aware of woman's position in a male-run world. Here it is an Aryan wife who, through sacrifice to a man, alters the fate of some Jewish men. (How this relates to the modern widow's sudden piety is not clear.)

Von Trotta has spoken openly of the difficulty she had in getting this film financed and of the numerous revisions she had to make to her original screenplay. (Originally it concentrated on the Rosenstrasse events. The modern sections and the baroness were added at the producers' wishes.) I have rarely seen a film that so plainly showed its patchings and concessions. Admittedly, she has not patronized her material. Though she has made the film as if it were truly hers, it isn't. A lot of supposedly appealing *décor* has been draped on stark fact. Allow, if you like, that she had to change her script in order to make the film. But the viewer can see only the film she made, not the one she might have done. *Rosenstrasse* is again only a sad reminder of the earlier von Trotta.

From France comes another film about Jews, this time just after World War II. **ALMOST PEACEFUL** was directed by Michel Deville, who, with Rosalinde Deville, adapted the screenplay from a novel by Robert Bober. The setting is a ladies' garment workshop in Paris in 1946. There is one Gentile woman who works there; the other eight are Jews who somehow survived the German-French fascist era. The air seems to hum with a sense of relief and good fortune, though the people say little about it. In a way the audience, knowing the facts, helps to supply that atmosphere. One of the key moments in the picture comes near the beginning. A young man is hired, and the boss asks him to introduce himself. He stands up and gives his name, a very Jewish one, and the room rocks with laughter. The non-Jewish

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woman is puzzled, and the boss tells her that she needs to spend more time with them and she will understand. That happy laughter is a memorable moment.

Love and other stories are invoked to keep the film going, but they are not what it is really about. The theme is survival, and the blessing of being alive and working and teasing and chatting. An exception: one middle-aged man, a widower, who is tactfully pursued by one of the women, leaves his job, apparently because he doesn't want to be happy.

Deville is an experienced director, and he composes this picture very neatly. He punctuates from time to time with freeze frames for no perceptible reason, except perhaps to show that he didn't live through the era of Truffaut and the Nouvelle Vague for nothing. Also, he rustles up that Parisian standby, the neighborhood hooker with a heart of gold. One of them even is woven into the story with some hint of permanence. But the most pleasant aspect of the picture is its relish of the moment in which it is set. Deville doesn't omit mention of the anti-Semitism in postwar France; still, this little tailoring shop is a good place to have reached after the preceding years. ■

DAVID HAJDU ON MUSIC

The Blogging of American Pop

JOHNNY MERCER, ONE OF THE MASTER artisans of pre-rock popular music, was driving with some friends to the Newport Jazz Festival one summer in the early 1960s when a Chuck Berry song came on the radio. Mercer listened closely and grinned, as one of his car mates, the film-maker Jean Bach, recalls. Soon he was singing along, beaming. Mercer leaned his face into the rushing air and slapped out the beat of the song on the side of the car that Bach's husband had rented for the weekend—a big red convertible, ideally suited to the moment. Bach isn't certain what record was playing, but she recalls it as something in the vein of "School Days" ("Hail, hail, rock and roll!") or "No Particular Place to Go," the latter of which was a top-ten hit in the summer of 1964. Nor does she know what Mercer was thinking as he rocked and rolled up Interstate 95, although she remembers the occasion as "a picture of freedom."

While the author of "Autumn Leaves" and "The Days of Wine and Roses" found momentary liberation in Berry's freewheeling odes to teendom, the rising generation of young people had taken up rock around the clock because the music seemed anathema to everything that Johnny Mercer and his milieu represented—refinement, maturity, professionalism. Berry, like Mercer, made his reputation as a lyricist, the words of his breakthrough songs being the active ingredient that turned rhythm and blues into rock and roll. Berry gave kids a music about their world (or dominant elements of it as imagined by a man in his mid-thirties), a hostel from adult society and its serious goings-on, a quotidian limbo ordered by the routines of attending school and killing time. "Up in the mornin' and out to school," he sang (in "School Days"), or (in "Too Much Monkey Business") "Same thing every day, gettin' up, goin' to school/No need for me to complain, my objection's over-ruled," or (in "No Particular Place to Go") "Cruisin' and playin' the radio with no particular place to go."

Much of the musical genre that Berry wrought—that is, the sounds on car radios for five decades now—has retained that absorption with the common rituals of everyday life among those living (literally or otherwise) outside the grown-up sphere. It was there in the beach music of the 1960s, reaching an early peak with Brian Wilson's myopic "In My Room." It permeated the Beatles' youthful songs about writing letters and holding hands. It waned with the rise of inflated styles such as psychedelia, heavy metal, and art rock, but returned with the punk of the Ramones, who brought American pop back to high school, and with the

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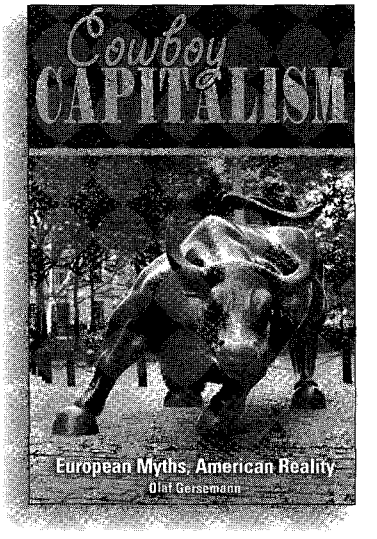
—*Milton Friedman*



While the U.S. economy may create more growth, Europeans think they are better off when it comes to job security, income equality, and other factors. But does European-style "comfy capitalism" really deliver better results than American "cowboy capitalism"?

German reporter Olaf Gersemann checked the facts and discovered that the greater market freedoms in the United States create a more flexible, adaptable, and prosperous system than the declining welfare states of Europe. *Cowboy Capitalism* is a provocative and devastating rebuttal to the stereotypes promoted by the likes of William Greider, Paul Krugman, and Michael Moore.

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New Wave of Talking Heads, with all those songs about buildings and food. There were strains of it in grunge and alt-rock, which are descendants of punk and New Wave and deal in large part with the internal minutiae of dysfunction. (Hip-hop has little interest in the ordinary or in smallness of any kind, and revels in grandiosity and ostentation.)

Now pop prosaism has reached full bloom with the work of a school of young (and youngish) singer-songwriters whose aesthetic is based upon having no particular place to go and nothing in particular to say. This is a phenomenon as yet unmeasured, as far as I know. *Billboard* has not yet introduced a tedium chart, despite the success of practitioners of the discipline such as John Mayer and Aimee Mann (and sometimes Dave Matthews). I have heard a few dozen albums of this sort—collections of simple, modest tunes centered on workaday events and small moments. Many come from singer-songwriters with cultish followings, such as Sam Beam (a multi-instrumentalist who records under the name Iron and Wine), Mark Oliver Everett (another multi-tracker, who records as Eels), F. M. Cornog (who uses the name East River Pipe), and Mark Linkous (who, along with other musicians, plays various instruments to record as Sparklehorse). I have also seen at least twice as many lesser-known performers of their ilk in the clubs of Manhattan's Lower East Side over the past couple of years. The numbers amassing on this tiny, bleak piece of musical terrain are overtaxing its limited resources.

ONE EVENING THIS SUMMER, I went to the Living Room on Ludlow Street to hear Jill Sobule (who is quite another story, as I will explain shortly) and saw four acts before she came on. Three were essentially interchangeable singer-songwriters, two women and one man. The first murmured songs that seemed to be about students hanging out in student hangouts such as the Living Room and the cafés surrounding it—hearing the songs, one feels as if one were in them, an effect that is flattering and interestingly referential, but ultimately depressing. The second artist, who crooned with an ambiguous Eastern European accent but spoke like my cousins in New Jersey, did similar-sounding tunes (meaning numbers that sounded like their predecessors as well as one another) that were also about social inertia; one song described not wanting to talk to a stranger in a park who was reading a magazine and may or may not have wanted to talk to anyone anyway. (That is a paraphrase, but close to the actual lyrics.) The third had more of a country-and-western approach, but still sang meandering story-songs with little in the way of stories to tell; her hallmark was to do so in a monotone that had a twang.

The name of the club notwithstanding, this is hardly living-room music. Deeply solitary in point of view and mode, it feels inappropriate to a setting even nominally social. Its home—its universe—is the dorm room. The thoughts in the lyrics often seem like just that: thoughts, rather than language filtered, selected, and organized for public consumption. They are things most of us would say aloud only if no one could hear us. As Mark Linkous of Sparklehorse sings in his tune "Pig":

> I wanna try and fly
> I wanna try and die
> I wanna be a pig
> I wanna fuck a car
>
> I wanna new face right now
> And I want it bad
> I wanna new body that's strong
> I'm a butchered cow

Like Sam Beam, Linkous often sounds all alone on his CDs, occasionally singing in a hush so soft that the microphone barely picks up his voice. (The credits to the Iron and Wine CDs note, "Recorded, produced and written by Sam Beam. Recorded at Sam's house in Miami, Florida." Much the same, F. M. Cornog has recorded the bulk of his output in his apartment in Astoria, Queens.) Of course, every modern (or modernist) songwriter is engaged in personal expression, and the sentiments of most popular songs have always been intimate. But Everett, Beam, and their peers are doing something that transcends self-expression—or, rather, that precedes it. The sounds they make, just barely, are the closest thing to not expressing themselves at all and keeping everything inside.

The obvious corollary to this genre is Internet communication. In the work's formless, unmediated presentation of highly personal yet largely generic trivia, it is musical blogging. The lyrics tend to be heavily laden with detail: descriptions of lovers (usually lost), friends, parents, siblings, passersby, neighbors, pets. We follow the songwriters as they walk or drive around, absorbing the scenery with them. Just as often, we sit or lie with them as they imagine things never done. As Mark Oliver Everett sings in "Fucker":

> Could go to a party
> But I don't really want to
> For now I'm sitting out here on my porch
> Writing in the dark air
> Listening to my little black cat meow

In a set at the C Note on Avenue C in Manhattan early this year, a singer-songwriter used nearly half of his allocated twenty minutes on stage to do one song about how the audience looked from the stage the last time he was there. I wrote some phrases from the lyrics in my notes: "spotlight glaring like the sun," "clang of plates and glasses," "faces looking back at me." Below them I wrote, "What am I doing?" I had begun to feel that I was giving the song more thought than the composer had.

OWING TO ITS RANDOMNESS and its excess, the ostensible richness of specificity in such music, like the yammering in a blog, is impoverishing. The indiscriminate details in songs like John Mayer's, with their couplets about standing in line at CVS, ordering take-out food, or sitting around watching CNN, fail to illuminate; they obscure. By telling us everything he sees and does, no matter how banal, the songwriter reveals nothing of himself (or herself, in the case of Mann) and the world he mutters about. There is a real-time quality to this work: instead of compressing experience, it simply reiterates it. It denies the distinction between experience and art. No music could be more appropriate to the wired culture of e-mail and cell phones, wherein every moment appears to warrant recording, one way or another.

When Bob Dylan released his song "Positively 4th Street" as a single in the mid-1960s, the venomous assault on an unnamed friend or lover (likely a stand-in for the folk purists who had accused Dylan of apostasy for shifting to rock and roll) seemed as liberating in its way as "School Days" had been. "You've got a lot of nerve," Dylan snarled, "to say you are my friend." Joni Mitchell would recall hearing the record for the first time and thinking, "Oh—now we can write about anything!" Of course, com-

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posers working prior to and outside of rock (in art song, musical theater, the blues, and many of the world's folk musics) had long exercised that license. Dylan still stretched his listeners' ears. He seemed to break apart the frame of rock songwriting in music that is surely the model for most of today's singer-songwriters.

Unfortunately, Dylan's breadth exerts no more appreciable influence than his prolificity. Liam Clancy, the Irish folk-singer, once told his young Greenwich Village compatriot, "Bobby, you have a great gift. Those wonderful words just flow out of you. But do there have to be so many of them? All those verses!" Dylan's young descendants—songwriters such as Mayer, Everett, and Linkous, as well as Devendra Banhart, Joanna Newsom, Adem (just Adem), and others, are writing not just about anything, but about everything. As such, they tend to communicate nothing except self-absorption.

I have to wonder if that isn't the point, to some degree, for at least a few of them. These are not artists without talent or intelligence. To the contrary, Sam Beam and Mark Linkous in particular are skillful musicians, each with a knack for evoking mood, and their lyrics have moments of subtle potency. ("We found your name across the chapel door/ carved in cursive with a table fork/ muddy hymnals and some boot marks where you'd been," sings Beam in Iron and Wine's "Muddy Hymnal.") Why would they and so many of their contemporaries devote themselves so zealously to mundanity if not out of some kind of shared conviction? The incessant sameness and vacancy of their music certainly mirrors the environment in which today's young people grew up, a landscape of chain outlets and theme restaurants scrolling over and over like the background in a Hanna-Barbera cartoon. Perhaps they mean their prosaic, soundalike songs to reflect their world and at the same time to protest it, as if to say, "Look at all the nothingness everywhere, and listen to what it has made of us."

JILL SOBULE, A THIRTY-EIGHT-YEAR-old singer and songwriter who has released five albums on nearly as many labels since 1990, seems to be working in the same genre of prolix vapidity, but she is not. She writes songs fixed on the domestic realm, and she sings them in a pretty, girlish voice. In her hands, however, neither the material nor its execution is as simple as it first seems. Sobule is a deft ironist. She is smart and original, a treasure undervalued by inevitable association with countless lessers who also happen to be singing about going to the laundromat in Brooklyn.

Once a teenage rocker who sang and played lead guitar in bands in her native Denver, Sobule was signed to MCA Records when she was twenty-three and tossed into the mitts of Todd Rundgren, who produced her first album as if it were his own (and not hers), applying thick coats of his pop gloss onto Sobule's earnest youthful tunes. The record (*Things Here Are Different*) failed to justify the cost of Rundgren's misplaced excesses, and Sobule was dropped from the label. Five years later, she made the first CD of her creative maturity, an eponymous album of sharp, wry songs about life on the fringes. One of the tracks, "Supermodel," a punkish trifle that toyed with the cliché of impossible dreams, made it onto the *Clueless* soundtrack, and another, "I Kissed a Girl," a rocker about a fling with another woman, became a hit single. The latter was a breakthrough in pop history and a source of great pride to Sobule, although it ended up pigeonholing her as a lesbian artist. "I've been with women, and I've been with men," Sobule has said, "and they both suck, actually." (The biography on Sobule's website recounts her early life with her parents, the "Flying Sobules" circus troupe; her duty in a Marine Corps special forces unit in Vietnam; and other fanciful imaginings instead of factual data.)

Four years ago, Sobule released a wonderful little album, *Pink Pearl*, which, like all her music after the Rundgren project, has deserved more attention. A pearl indeed, it uses to its advantage everything that undermines the music of her peers. It is full of very small moments—watching a woman working out at the gym, downing grits at a roadhouse in the South, making weekly visits to an old-lady friend—but they are discerningly selected, vividly observed, and ripe with multiple meanings. Musically, it is quite simple—melodies of a narrow range set against a few chords played by a small band or Sobule alone on acoustic guitar—yet it is tuneful, clever, and pithy. And it expresses its share of impassivity—one song, "One of These Days," is a dance tune for people too lazy to get up—but never romanticizes it. The record also has a couple of attributes lacking in a great deal of contemporary music of every style: it is fun

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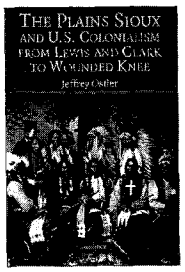

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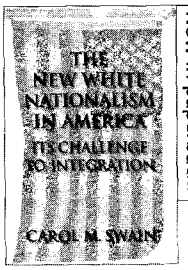

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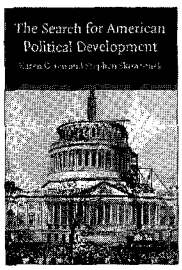

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and it is dark, frequently at the same time. In "Guy Who Doesn't Get It," for instance, Sobule sings:

> Say I'm in the tub with a razor blade
> You'd walk in and ask me, "How was your day?"
> Then you'd lather up and start to shave
> As I bleed on the new tile floor

Sobule's new CD, *Underdog Victorious*, refers to a childhood friend who is the subject of the title song, to the TV cartoon hero voiced by Wally Cox, and, obliquely and most ironically, to Sobule herself. It is of a piece with *Pink Pearl*—a lovely, charming, and often disturbing album. The mood is a bit grayer and bittersweet; one song, "Tel Aviv," tells of a woman hijacked to the Middle East for sex; another, "Last Line," stunningly interlaces the desperation of clinging lovers with their craving for cocaine. The highlight, "Strawberry Gloss," likewise recalls the summer of a young girl's coming-of-age as a time of entwined exhilaration, bafflement, and terror.

In the set she did at the Living Room this summer, Sobule mentioned that she had just returned from serving as the opening act for Don Henley. She had been booed by his audience in Atlanta, she said, because she had been wearing a T-shirt that read, "My bush would make a better president!" (Sobule now offers shirts like it for sale on her website.) She is not crude, as a rule; in fact, she generally comes across as sweetly demure, both on her recordings and on stage. She is impish, though, and no longer seems to give a hoot about public approval. She appears to have given up on mainstream success. This, no doubt, is a source of her work's power—it is devoid of affectation and careerism—and the reason she may well remain deserving of more attention for some time. ■

Thomas J. Brown and Elisabeth Sifton

Against Appomattox

GETTYSBURG:
A NOVEL OF THE CIVIL WAR
By Newt Gingrich and
William R. Forstchen
(St. Martin's Press, 384 pp., $24.95)

GRANT COMES EAST:
A NOVEL OF THE CIVIL WAR
By Newt Gingrich and
William R. Forstchen
(St. Martin's Press, 404 pp., $24.95)

SIX YEARS AGO, CONGRESSIONAL Republicans of the "revolutionary" majority of 1994–1998 drove Speaker of the House Newt Gingrich from office. He had reassured them that the party was likely to pick up forty seats in the midterm elections, but instead it had lost five seats, and these political miscalculations came on top of his wobbly response to various charges that the House Ethics Committee had brought against him two years earlier. He left in disgrace, trailing exasperated and angry recriminations.

Yet Gingrich has never really gone away. He seems omnipresent, self-confidently opining about foreign and defense policy, what's wrong with the State Department, what we should do about Iraq. Since our culture gives a shamed or defeated public figure a radioactive second half-life on television, especially if he is affiliated with think tanks, Gingrich is cozily plugged into Fox News as well as the Hoover Institution and the American Enterprise Institute. He is proud of his "man of ideas" reputation, but his post-congressional career focuses on staying in the public eye and on his consultancy business; his company claims that he is "widely recognized as a transformational leader, unparalleled in his ability to create and lead successful large-scale change." It adds that as Speaker "he disrupted the status quo by moving power out of Washington and back to the American people." This is not how most voters remember it, but it sure sounds like Gingrich. His specialty has always been a fizzy cocktail of policy-wonk discourse and Washington fast talk.

Another specialty is his bookishness. According to a recent article in *The Weekly Standard*, he loves to read spy novels, mysteries, and thrillers, and even reviews them for Amazon.com: "Clearly something of an addict, Gingrich finds that he 'can't put down' dozens of 'page-turners' that 'grab you on the first page and carry you straight to the end' and so has to read 'nonstop.'" What Gingrich likes best, the report continued, are books about politics and power, about important revolutionary ideas and their effect in the public arena. And he respects military men; he gave five stars to Wesley Clark's "timely" recent book, for example.

Given all this thoughtful activity, you would think that Gingrich's own two recent novels, co-authored with William Forstchen and with assistance from Albert S. Hanser, might have attracted more attention, especially since he has described them each as "an active history study in the lessons of warfare." What could be more pertinent? Here we are in the midst of a war initiated, conducted, and defended by Gingrich's own party, with brave American soldiers dying every week, and here is a brave Republican to tell us what it means, actively: why wars are fought, how wars are won. Here, perhaps, this man "recognized internationally as an expert on world history, military issues, and international affairs" (those are the words on his website) can help us. "Has Newt been gone long enough," an aide asked recently, "so that people, especially Democrats, can put their dislike of the name 'Gingrich' aside long enough to look at his ideas?"

Well, let's try. But before we get to his novels and his ideas, we should keep in mind a few of Gingrich's comments on contemporary developments. When the Senate rejected the nomination of Robert Bork to the Supreme Court in 1987, he warned that "the left at its core understands in a way Grant understood after Shiloh that this is a civil war, that only one side will prevail, and the other side will be relegated to history. This war has to be fought with the scale and duration

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and savagery that is only true of civil wars. While we are lucky in this country that our civil wars are fought at the ballot box, not on the battlefields, nonetheless it is a civil war." This odd and ugly remark at least clarified the vehemence of his purely sectarian politics.

More recently, on *Meet the Press* in May, speaking of Iraq (or perhaps of the war on terror, it was hard to tell), Gingrich said: "Now, in a real war from 1861 to '64 [*sic*], it was a mess. From 1939 to 1944 [*sic*], it was a mess ... if the president has any specific need right now, it is to look the American people in the face and say ... 'We have to stick this out and win.'" Again he doesn't get us far: wars worth fighting are messy, this war is messy like the other ones, but we must be steadfast. What else? The important thing, Gingrich said, is to "hope that both in Afghanistan, in Pakistan and in Saudi Arabia and Iraq that the forces of civilization defeat the forces of barbarism." So does Gingrich imagine that in America's most gruesome conflict, the terrible, "real" war of 1861–1865, the forces of civilization defeated the forces of barbarism? Well, yes. In Gingrich's imaginative retelling of the Civil War, the South wins.

IN *GETTYSBURG*, WHICH APPEARED last year, Gingrich and his co-author contrive to have Robert E. Lee win at Gettysburg. Events occur more or less as we know them to have happened—until the first night of the celebrated battle, when Lee decides not to launch Longstreet's assault and instead orders a flanking movement that miraculously enables his soldiers to circle around Meade's army and place themselves between the Union force and Washington. The novel closes with both Union and Confederate bigwigs pondering the significance of Grant's imminent arrival from Vicksburg and the inevitable struggle to defend or to capture Washington.

In *Grant Comes East*—surely the second in a trilogy—we are still in the summer of 1863. After routing the Army of the Potomac at Union Mills, Lee makes a brief, almost successful assault on the capital's fortifications before withdrawing to take Baltimore. Grant is summoned to save the Union, but while he is building an army in Harrisburg, Lee draws out and destroys the reinforced Army of the Potomac, now commanded by General Sickles, who has shown himself a conniving political brute in his ruthless suppression of rioting New Yorkers only days before. As the novel ends, Lee is readying for an epic encounter with Grant's army, heading toward Richmond.

Gingrich's novels are among the most recent examples, and certainly not the most original ones, in a long line of counter-factual speculation about the Civil War. A few of their predecessors were interesting thought-experiments, offering provocative interpretations of the past. Gingrich likes to be compared to Winston Churchill, so he probably knows that Churchill, too, used the battle of Gettysburg as a starting point for political speculation. In 1930, after visiting Civil War sites on a trip to the United States, he wrote a respectable if rather peculiar essay that imagined Lee winning at Gettysburg, capturing Washington, and then, with British help, securing the South's independence by emancipating the slaves; a transatlantic English-speaking Association, eventually extended to the United States as well, later achieves a peaceful solution to the European crisis of 1914, after which other nations move to emulate it and ensure global harmony. The implausible fantasy was far-fetched, to put it mildly, but it grew out of plausible, near-at-hand politics—Churchill's strong belief in the Anglo-American relationship—and it reinforced his wise call for transatlantic cooperation in a perilous time.

Most Civil War fiction is not thinly disguised political propaganda. Serious historical novels deepen our understanding of the past by showing fictional characters engaging with real historical forces. But the Gingrich-Forstchen novels of the Civil War prefer to offer a comfortingly sentimental or violent alternative to the painful truths of real history, an escapist fantasy that takes the reader away from the difficult and disappointing present. Such books ooze out of the vast swamp of contemporary pseudo-literature, humid fantasy and geeky science fiction, adjacent to which is the spongy field where lurid video games are spawned, and all those graphic novels the Japanese love in which their country triumphs in World War II.

Gingrich has dabbled in this bog for some time, and not just as a reader. At the height of his congressional fame, he and the same two men who are his collaborators here embarked on a counter-factual trilogy about World War II with the first

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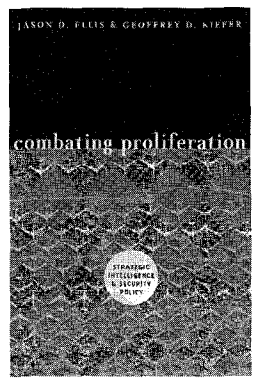

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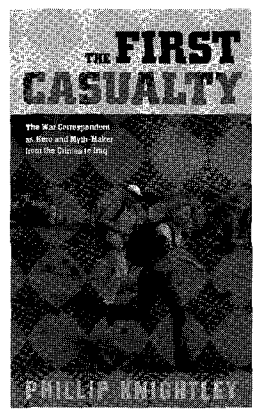

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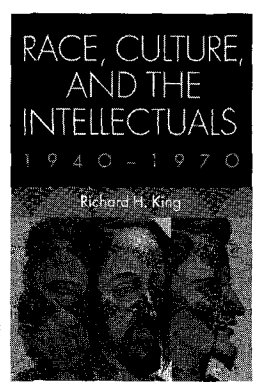

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volume, *1945*, in which ... don't even ask, you don't want to know. The book sank without a trace. (One review, from *The Washington Post*, said, "It is torture from first to last, downright embarrassing in its clumsy prose and lurching plot.") Gingrich evidently abandoned plans for the trilogy when *1945* tanked, for the announced second book, *Fortress Europa*, never appeared, whereas *Gettysburg* and its sequel are enjoying a degree of success. Gingrich's message about World War II, whatever it was, did not get across, but something about these new books resonates, as the academics say.

SO WHAT IS THE POLITICAL GOAL that Gingrich's novels are meant to reinforce today? Of all fantasies for a right-wing Republican to entertain in 2004, why this one? The recent controversies over government display of Confederate emblems across the South have demonstrated that Republicans know how much political currency there is in the Lost Cause or, as Gingrich would have it, the Triumphant Cause, a venerable tradition that dates back to the postwar propaganda of Alexander Stephens and Jefferson Davis. As David W. Blight has shown in *Race and Reunion: The Civil War in American Memory*, the heart of this faith in the legitimacy of the Confederacy consists in a denial that issues of race and slavery were central to the Civil War or, by extension, to the American experience. In *Gettysburg* and *Grant Comes East*, slavery is a special concern of only one small, noisy faction in the Old South, and not the pervasive and defining institution that it actually was. For Gingrich's Robert E. Lee, "the higher ideal of fighting for the Constitution, for the right of states against the usurpation of the central government, was the cause." Here is a usable past for a politician proud of "moving power out of Washington and back to the American people," that is, to white people.

Of course, toeing the Lost Cause line requires Gingrich to overlook the countless statements that Southerners themselves made about their real motive for secession, the preservation of slavery. This is awkward, since it is all but impossible to ignore the torrent of evidence proving this. To take but one example from Gingrich's own state, Senator Alfred Iverson of Georgia (whose son fought ignominiously at Gettysburg, but not in *Gettysburg*) declared: "Slavery *must* be maintained—in the Union, if possible; out of it, if necessary: peaceably if we may; forcibly if we must." The premier secessionist paper, the *Charleston Mercury*, was even plainer, declaring on the eve of Lincoln's election: "The issue before the country is the extinction of slavery." And slaveholders did not hesitate to forfeit their allegedly cherished states' rights doctrines if they interfered with protection of the peculiar institution—as when they supported the Fugitive Slave Act, which dramatically expanded the power of the federal government. None of this is in the Gingrich books.

IT IS BAD ENOUGH THAT A FORmer speaker of the House should promote this retrogressive neo-Confederate line about states' rights and popular sovereignty. But something else is going on in *Gettysburg* and *Grant Comes East*, too. The brunt of the dramatic action, if we can call it that, is borne by endless palavers between generals and politicians about the conduct and the purpose of the war, or of war. Here is where we discover Gingrich's ideas about "transformational leadership."

Sure, there are obligatory scenes of battles prepared for, fought, lost, and won, but these set pieces are almost unbearably boring, despite the inevitable spilling of guts, blowing off of limbs, oozing of blood and mud, shrieking of young soldiers and wounded horses. Sure, poignant American landscapes are predictably viewed from train windows or from horseback. But everything else is weirdly out of kilter. The stresses of war on family and social life in the South or North are not depicted or acknowledged. We meet only a few soldiers, mostly dying ones (the spotlight is reserved for officers); fewer women, except remembered sweetie-pies back home; and still fewer slaves. (The longest conversation with a black person is one between Lincoln and a White House servant with whom he suddenly develops a friendship. Gingrich-Forstchen strain to be politically correct in their respect for black people, but the effort shows.) The sacred South is scarcely bodied forth at all. The best the authors can do is this, from *Gettysburg*: "Lee fights to preserve a different world, elegant though built on the corruption of slavery, but still elegant, where men are expected to act as gentlemen and ladies, well, to act as ladies."

THE NUMBERLESS SCENES OF men talking suggest the drama that Gingrich likes best: that of powerful men not actually doing anything, but bloviating about the consequences of what they do. Punditry, circa 1863. They all agree that the outcome of war turns on the performance of individual generals; the theme of military leadership narcissistically captivates them. Their high status and the urgency of their conferences are underlined by their being offered, and drinking, lots of coffee when they meet—occasionally wine, whiskey, or lemonade (cigars, too, when Grant is around). If they are Union officers, they swear, snap, snarl, and grind out cigars on the floor. On both sides, the men (except for Lee) use clubby first names with each other, as if they were talking to Tim Russert, and so does the narrator (not always accurately: John Bell Hood wouldn't have been called John, as he is here, but Sam). But this is the least offensive of the books' anachronisms.

Gingrich's theories about leadership come together with his spin on the Confederacy's enduring values in a wonderful subplot that blossoms hilariously in *Grant Comes East*, when Lee has just taken Baltimore at considerable cost. It is not yet clear whether the Rebels can prevail to the point of claiming Maryland for the Confederacy. Lee—portrayed throughout as a churchgoing, austere, rather Christ-like figure of awesome nobility—is worried about the lawless confusion in this slaveholding border state. Its Unionist officials have withdrawn, spitting mad, from Annapolis to the Eastern Shore; you'd think they were Sunnis holed up in Fallujah. And he wonders whether he can "keep order here until we can turn it back over to a reorganized police force.... My army is a field army, not an occupation army." Hmm.

At this juncture, Judah Benjamin, smoothly flattering the great man ("You are noted for your piety, sir"), suggests that Lee forsake the company of President Davis and join him for dinner at the home of a wise old rabbi. Here comes the Gingrichian transposition of an evangelical Christian right-winger allying himself with AIPAC to gain long-range strategic wisdom for holding on to power. Rabbi Rothenberg came from Prussia to Baltimore in the 1840s, we learn, and he keeps kosher. After dinner, which spares the grateful Lee from salt pork, the rabbi suggests to him that he

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cannot win the war unless he addresses the underlying political crisis: truth is, the moral power behind Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation, crafty and manipulative a political gesture as it was, has trumped the constitutional arguments which, they all believe, vindicate the Confederate cause. For the Confederacy to prevail, it must seize back the moral high ground. Merely insisting on constitutional fine points will be as fruitless, and as unholy, as Talmudic disputes can sometimes be. (" 'Talmud'? Lee asked. 'Please enlighten me.' ") Southerners must rise above legalisms, for at the end of the day God prefers a good man to a man who merely studies the law. The rabbi recommends that the South make a gesture equivalent to Lincoln's: "You can then argue that there is no longer any point to the war. Lincoln altered the terms; you have agreed to those terms; the issue is settled."

It is ahistorically but emphatically clear that Gingrich's Lee gets from his Christianity not only his moral code but also his calm conviction that he is merely providing opportunities for the manifestation of God's will. Equally, the noble warrior hates being pulled into politics. But Benjamin, with his shrewd playing of a high moral Judeo-Christian hand, has given him a tantalizing hope: that with a Southern emancipation will come an influx of black soldiers on the Rebel side. Many African Americans are already fighting for the Confederacy, the rabbi claims amazingly, and fighting together will "bond the men of the South, black and white, into a bond of blood that will forever change the social dynamic of your newly freed country. When men bleed side by side on the battlefield, they become brothers in peace." With this appalling perversion of the facts, Gingrich and Forstchen prepare the demise not only of Jefferson Davis and his fellow slaveholding diehards, but probably of the Union, too. The evangelically powerful Lee and the wise rabbi together represent a New South, and this New South must surely prevail.

WHERE DOES THIS LEAVE Gingrich with Lincoln and Grant? Gingrich's obvious dislike of the Union, which he sees as a dysfunctional tyranny, competes with a kind of twisted admiration for the Union's two leaders, since they are, after all, heroes of his own political party and winners according to the historical record. So he has to show them as at least competent and resourceful, which is more than you can say of the other Northerners. Lincoln is shown to be important because he lives in the White House, spouts clichés, and stands firm. As a mere politician, though, he is a lesser mortal than a fine general. Grant is more to Gingrich's liking: similarly wooden, but distinguishable by the ever-present possibility that he might fall off the wagon. To the degree that they represent hope for the future, it is not because of their superior grasp of the ways and means of the war or their larger sense of the national destiny, but because they are Westerners.

Gingrich's Grant and Lincoln savor the homey feeling that Southerners are more like the Westerners they are used to than Easterners are, since Southerners "could talk of crops, and raising hogs, and trying to spark a girl behind the barn at a cornhusking"—activities of which the "comrades from Boston and New York City" may be ignorant. "I think I'm going to like working with you, Grant," Gingrich has Lincoln say in perfect movie-speak. "You're from the West, as I am; we see things differently. None of this flummery and posturing. I'm sick to death of it, while good boys are dying." This jibes with Gingrich's known political preferences, but it requires him once again to twist the historical truth. Antebellum Southern politicians sought for decades to cultivate alliances with the rural West against the more urban East; but in the West both townsmen (like Lincoln and Grant) and farmers recognized that the line between free states and slave states was more important to them than any agreeable cultural familiarity with the South, or than tensions with the East over regional interests in agriculture and manufacturing.

Anyway, who could ever like an Easterner? In Gingrich's imagination, the Northeastern United States is a dystopia, a drunken, rabble-rousing, unhappy, overcrowded, uncultured nightmare. Its society is intensely political (a terrible inconvenience for leaders), its press all-powerful. The government's regulation of business is intrusive, and it harms the army, where generals advance in rank through political maneuvering rather than merit. The people are fickle and anarchic, lacking as they do a strong hand from above. They are also godless, or their soldiers are. When Union officers set up headquarters in a Pennsylva-

NOT JUST BLACK AND WHITE.

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nia church, they swear, yell, and behave poorly, whereas Lee, similarly borrowing holy real estate, makes sure to get permission from the minister (who "said he was a Southern man and would be honored"), is polite, and insists that everything be "returned to its proper place." Baltimoreans, in another passage, are eager to compare "the valiant and yet humble Christian boys of the South with the hawk-faced Yankees of Massachusetts and New York."

A STARTLING MOMENT IN THE Gingrich-Forstchen nightmare of the North comes early in the second novel, when the defeat at Union Mills incites a mob of New Yorkers to dreadful carnage, even worse than what actually occurred during the draft riots. The authors imagine a crowd at the corner of Union Square "roaring with delight" when a drunken rioter urinates on the Stars and Stripes—whereupon General Sickles orders his troops to shoot most of them dead. My oh my. "'Remember, men,' Dan shouted. 'These are traitors and rebels, the same that we faced in Virginia. The difference is, at least our enemies in Virginia were soldiers like us, who fought with honor.'" He swaggers away to join Boss Tweed at Delmonico's. Disorderly, dishonorable, and traitorous local rabble—that's Gingrich's idea of New York City men and women, 9/11 or no 9/11.

The fruits of Northeastern evil are also seen in the Union's losing commanders. The snapping, snarling Meade is paralyzed, unable to develop any kind of independent will, which Gingrich will tell you is the true leader's most significant virtue. The irony in *Gettysburg* is that he launches an attack that he knows will likely doom his army because he assumes that Lincoln expects him to do so, when in fact the president doesn't. A typical Northern screwup: wussy fighting men hamstrung by politics. Sickles, temperamentally the opposite, has the same flaws: he is a demagogue, riding the waves of public opinion, using his connections to maximize political capital gained in his luckier, better moments. After tyrannically suppressing the draft riots, he turns to graft in recruiting for the Union army and institutes a whiskey ration. Zeal for a victory that will launch his presidential campaign leads him into a Confederate trap and causes his eventual defeat. There's a New Yorker for you.

Perhaps some of the Southern provincialism in this cheesy presentation of Gingrich's opportunistic themes comes from Forstchen, a history professor at Montreat College in North Carolina, proud of its "Christ-Centered Education." Forstchen has also written novels based on *Star Trek* and on the card game "Magic: The Gathering," as well as nine novels in something called the Lost Regiment series, in which a unit of Civil War soldiers enters a space-time warp that places them in an alternate world in which humans are enslaved. Well, there you go; slavery is a real problem everywhere. But no matter who is responsible for the gray dumpity-dum prose and the ludicrous plots, it is impossible to be indifferent to the novels' disagreeable political intentions and essential dishonesty.

CONSIDER THE AUTHORS' DECISION to illustrate the novels with canonical photographs taken mostly from the Library of Congress's Civil War archives. Hallowed historical documentation is used to encourage readers to imagine that they are reading a plausible version of Civil War realities. This has the same falsity as re-enactments—simulations much favored by Lost Cause supporters—with their "virtual" experience of patriotic gore. One thinks, too, of Gingrich's many references to his soldier father as a way of giving himself military credentials, though he has had no military experience whatsoever, and did not even serve on the House Armed Services Committee.

The same instinct for non-truth can be found in the novels' portrayals of historical figures. Gingrich seems to have only a loose grip on what really did happen in 1863, let alone what might have happened, so it is not always clear when he and Forstchen have made changes for the sake of fiction and when they have just made mistakes. Indicating that James Blaine, rather than Hannibal Hamlin, was vice president of the United States suggests an unfamiliarity with the basic facts of American history. (Maybe this howler comes from Harry Turtledove's *How Few Remain*, in which Blaine is the American president who launches an invasion of a Confederacy that has won its independence.) Putting Winslow Homer, Clara Barton, John Hay, and Walt Whitman in places where they never were certainly adorns the narrative with celebrities, but it robs them of the identifying circumstances that would correctly establish their affinity with, or importance to, the Union side.

It is almost predictable, once you have grown accustomed to the level of imaginative enterprise here, that Robert Gould Shaw should whip up from South Carolina to help save Washington on July 18 with the black troops of the Massachusetts Fifty-Fourth Regiment, though it is not clear how Gingrich can describe the soldiers as veterans, for the assault on Fort Wagner has not taken place and may never happen. There is no good reason for them to be in the capital, except to keep Shaw in the story without having the storied conflict at Fort Wagner occur. True, Northern black and white boys "bleed together" at Fort Stevens, but evidently they do not become "brothers in peace," as Rabbi Rothenberg imagined Confederate blacks and whites would. There will be no St. Gaudens monument, no *Glory*.

THE REAL TRAVESTY, THOUGH, is not of the details but of the very ground on which Gingrich wishes to fight: the nature of "transformational leadership." Lee is the hero of these books because he is a great military commander, which to Gingrich means that he insulates himself as much as possible from political accountability and exercises firm personal control over his subordinates. Having cleared the field for independent action, and being reassured by a certainty that he is the instrument of divine will, he becomes audaciously aggressive in battle. These characteristics do not precisely match those of the historical Lee, but they do precisely match the traits that George W. Bush's supporters identify as the hallmarks of what they think of as "strength" in a commander-in-chief.

Worse, the Gingrich novels eliminate one of history's best examples of a truly transformed, transforming, and transformative leader. To read Gingrich's novels is to be forced to imagine a United States that has had no experience of Abraham Lincoln's compassion, eloquence, wisdom, and magnanimous humility. One has instead a flatfooted lawyer whose views have not evolved since 1853, a sorry captive of circumstance, devoid of the moral power, the political shrewdness, the spiritual energy, and the tenacious intelligence that turned him into a great wartime president, won him re-election, and saved the Union. Gingrich can imagine only a cartoon "Westerner" of minimal charm and

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wit, whose ideas are coarse and whose politics are undependable. This Lincoln is redeemed, if that is the word, only by his sanctimonious ability to pray.

We learn in both novels that Gingrich envisions ordinary citizens largely as impediments to their leaders. So perhaps it is fitting that, in his rewriting of history, Lincoln will likely not give his Gettysburg Address, his greatest statement to the American people on the principles of democracy and freedom. We shall have to see in the next volume of this crude and tendentious fictional exercise if General Lee or President Davis will give the victor's speech at that hallowed place, extolling a nation dedicated to ... what? The proposition that all men are created unequal? That government of, by, and for slavery shall not perish from the earth? In the meantime, what a disgrace that readers, Yankee or Reb, are duped into thinking that Lincoln's most noble speech—and most quotable one—can be consigned to oblivion by a television politician who thrives on the sound bite and easily loses patience with the value of communication between a democratic people and the president whom they elect. ■

Joshua Kurlantzick

Move Over, Confucius

JESUS IN BEIJING:
HOW CHRISTIANITY IS TRANSFORMING CHINA AND CHANGING THE GLOBAL BALANCE OF POWER
By David Aikman
(Regnery, 344 pp., $27.95)

ON A VISIT TO CHINA several years ago, I happened to be in Shanghai after Jiang Zemin announced his theory on how the ruling party should update its ideology, so that Chinese communism would come to represent not only workers but also the country's history, culture, and most productive economic (read: capitalist) forces. This mind-numbingly boring theory, which Jiang called "The Three Represents," dominated discussion at party meetings in Beijing. So I spent my time in Shanghai chatting with acquaintances about the Three Represents. Shanghai has always been China's most urbane city, so surely its intellectuals would be feverishly arguing about Jiang's ideas.

But the professors had almost no interest in Jiang's theories. At the city's markets, where sellers have encyclopedic knowledge of bad Chinese action films, reporters found that no one seemed to have heard of the Three Represents. At Shanghai's newest and hippest watering hole—Starbucks—Chinese yuppies' conversation revolved around business deals and new clothes. And only a few blocks from Starbucks, average Shanghainese were paying rapt attention to another theory—actually, a set of imported theories. When I walked into a small structure near Nanjing Lu, a main shopping street, I saw hundreds of Chinese sitting in rows, listening to a man exhorting everyone to love one another, to create grassroots networks, to give themselves over to a power uncontrolled by the party. The audience listened raptly.

This scene was hardly unique. In the past decade, millions of Chinese have sought community, philosophy, and spiritual comfort outside the confines of communist ideology and their immediate families. In the first half of its reign, the Chinese Communist Party destroyed the institutions that had undergirded China's society for millennia, replacing them with Mao Zedong's all-destroying totalitarian ideology; and in the second half of its reign, the CCP embraced the very offense with which the chairman used to charge his worst enemies. But capitalism is not a political ideology, and money offers no theories on the nature of man, nor thoughts on death, nor ideas of how to organize a society. The party has scrambled to devise an alternative mass ideology based in part on Chinese nationalism; but judging by the response to the Three Represents, it is not exactly thrilling the population. Instead, average Chinese are desperately seeking an ideology even as Beijing has repressed many of those secular actors—liberal democrats, trade unions, non-governmental organizations—who might have provided alternatives to Marxism or the state's new cult of money.

For this reason, many Chinese are looking beyond secular civil society. Across the country, the old opiate of the people has returned, and the masses are mainlining it. China is in the early stages of its own Great Awakening. In fact, the greatest threat to Beijing today may not be George W. Bush or Chen Shui-bian or the Dalai Lama or Harry Wu, but rather an old, old figure who has played a role before in the collapse of venal Chinese regimes. I am referring to Jesus Christ.

COMMUNISM IS ABOUT AS RELEVANT today in China as it is in Las Vegas. Since 1979, the Chinese government has slashed subsidies to state enterprises, unleashed private entrepreneurs, and exhorted its population that making money is every citizen's new mission. Despite skeptics like myself, who fear that China's breakneck growth disguises a morass of economic problems, China has become the sixth-largest economy on earth. Last year Beijing for the first time welcomed entrepreneurs into the Communist Party, and across China the rawest forms of capitalism now are on display like open wounds. In Shanghai, vendors at markets brusquely grab customers' shoulders to pull them into their stalls, while homeless people beg on the streets. Factories in Guangdong, the region abutting Hong Kong that has become the manufacturing capital of the world, employ workers in Industrial Revolution–style conditions so horrendous that *The Economist* last year ran an article bearing the headline "Does China have 10 million slaves?"

The freeing of China's economy has come with an idolization of capitalism's heroes and an orgy of consumption. Chinese entrepreneurs are lionized the way the country once worshipped working-class heroes such as the peasant soldier Lei Feng. At Chinese universities, majors most conducive to obtaining a business job are increasingly popular, and the allure of the liberal arts is fading. Wealthy Chinese have made the country one of the top markets for luxury cars. When a rebel group devoted to Maoist revolutionary principles several years ago began organizing Nepal's poor in a war against the government, the Chinese government hastily disavowed the Maoists.

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All this has been placed on top of Beijing's decades-long evisceration of civil society and Chinese tradition, so that the one modern ideology promoted to average Chinese—social Darwinist capitalism—is not buttressed by anything else. No real democratic opening. No social welfare system. No plan for how to ultimately regulate capitalism. No real modernization of Confucianism and other traditional ideologies—the kind of reform that, in Thailand, has created modern Buddhist organizations devoted to socially progressive causes. After coming to power in 1949, the Communists announced that Chinese traditions—including Confucianism and Buddhism—were despicable legacies of feudalism. The worship of traditional gods was discouraged, violators were punished, and Confucianism was banned from the schools. The government created official versions of traditional religions staffed by party hacks. Chinese Catholics who continued to profess loyalty to Rome rather than to the state "patriotic" church were severely punished, as were Protestants who worshipped outside the party-linked church, known as the Three Self Patriotic Movement. Meanwhile, Beijing outlawed independent unions and nongovernmental organizations, imprisoned thousands of dissidents, and placed informers in workplaces.

In the past decade, Beijing has modernized its methods of control. President Hu Jintao and his colleagues came of age in the time of Tiananmen Square and the collapse of the Soviet Union, two developments that greatly frightened them. Hu and his peers have therefore developed a new, two-pronged style of repression. Rather than uniformly crushing anyone who questions the party, Beijing has tolerated a limited increase in social and political freedoms while at the same time harshly repressing groups that might develop a national following. Beijing has made it easier for average Chinese to get on the Internet, but has simultaneously instituted perhaps the most comprehensive system of Web monitors and firewalls in the world. Some Buddhist temples have been re-opened, but when Falun Gong developed a national following, it was brutalized. In the summer of 2002, Beijing allowed Chinese youths to hold their "Woodstock," a rollicking rock festival in the southern province of Yunnan. But young Chinese who attempt to organize independent labor unions are quickly muzzled.

This bipolar style of repression is extremely dangerous. Average Chinese are gaining a measure of freedom and are increasingly unwilling to surrender these gains. Yet when they push against Beijing, the state cracks down harder than in the past. At the same time, the ranks of China's unemployed are swelling as the government privatizes state-owned enterprises. Already there are more than 100 million jobless adults, and that number may more than double in the next decade. Little wonder, then, that the number of labor protests has more than quadrupled in the past decade, and the northeast, China's Rust Belt, makes Detroit look like a thriving metropolis.

What's more, precisely because of the CCP's repression, there are few outlets—whether political parties or civil society actors—to channel this anger and this desire for something more fulfilling than cash. The China Democracy Party, a grassroots organization, has been crushed. State churches and temples remain tainted by links to the party. Even hobby clubs that gain a national following risk being targeted by the authorities: in June 2003, Beijing dissolved more than sixty private hobby groups, including the notoriously dangerous China Fisherman's Association. And the old Confucian values—what many Western experts, desperately trying to understand Asia's economic miracle, once called "Asian values"—are long gone. The CCP has tried to reintroduce Confucianism as a national philosophy, but it had so discredited Confucianism during the Maoist period that older Chinese will not embrace Confucius again. Younger Chinese, reared on raw capitalism, see little use for traditional Confucian beliefs.

THUS MOST MAINLAND CHINESE have been severed from their past and thrown into a variety of capitalism that lives only for the present. Many are not satisfied believing in nothing but materialism. Younger Chinese, the first to succeed in a newly capitalist economy, are finding themselves spiritually, socially, and politically unfulfilled even after they have made their fortune; as *Time* recently reported, only "daily pilgrimages" to local religious institutions soothed rich women's feelings of emptiness. Meanwhile, as Linda Jakobson, author of *A Million Truths: A Decade in China*, has written, "middle-aged and elderly Chinese ... brought up believing that they had a mission in life [to further the goals of communism] ... mourn the loss of an ideology" and seek an all-encompassing replacement for Marxism-Leninism. For their part, China's millions of unemployed are desperately searching for something to convince them that life is still worth living. Even Fu Qingyuan, director of the Research Institute of Marxism-Leninism at the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, the country's most prestigious communism think tank, admitted to *Time* that "many people in China are facing a crisis of faith." For Qingyuan to make such an admission is like John Paul II telling the Catholic faithful, "Well, maybe Martin Luther was right."

Trying to fill the ideological vacuum, average Chinese are turning in staggering numbers to religion. In *Jesus in Beijing*, David Aikman, a former *Time* correspondent in Beijing, chronicles China's embrace of Christianity. Since many Chinese Christian groups are highly secretive, Aikman's book contains a wealth of new and important detail. The numbers touted by Aikman, who clearly believes that this Great Awakening will radically transform China for the better, are awe-inspiring. By his estimates, China may have nearly 100 million practicing Christians. Christianity in China is reportedly growing by more than 7 percent annually. Some scholars think that China will have 200 million Christians within two decades, making it perhaps the largest Christian country on earth, though others, such as Jason Kindopp of the National Committee on U.S.-China Relations, are more skeptical of these growth rates. As Aikman writes, "From the grassroots of the peasantry to high within China's establishment, the country [is] being seeded with believing Christians." Even in Beijing, new churches are being constructed that will hold more than four thousand worshippers each.

To be sure, other religions are enjoying revivals as well. When I last visited Kashgar, a city in the western province of

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Xinjiang, the central mosque was packed with hundreds of Muslim worshippers. Tibetan Buddhism is gaining new seekers; earlier this year *The Washington Post* reported that a Buddhist center in Sertar, a remote region of western China, has drawn as many as ten thousand pilgrims.

But Christianity—primarily the Protestant evangelical kind—is spreading like wildfire. In part, this is because evangelical Christianity, flexible enough to tailor its message to different groups of believers, offers the kind of personal empowerment that complements an increasingly individualistic society while offering an all-encompassing ideology for former devotees of communism. In part, it is because Christianity offers impoverished Chinese social welfare and a promise of a new life, since many Chinese associate Christianity with the life-changing miracles highlighted by evangelical groups. In part, it is because Christianity seems foreign—and thus enticing—to many Chinese, but it also has a history in the country and so it is not completely unknown.

Christianity probably was first introduced to China in the seventh century. In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries a wave of missionaries came to China; and in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries the number of Chinese Christians grew rapidly. In the mid–nineteenth century one charismatic Chinese Christian, Hong Xiuquan, launched a theocratic revolt against the crumbling Qing Dynasty that became known as the Taiping Rebellion. Though the rebellion was crushed, it fatally weakened China's last royal court.

Few Chinese Christians today are joining the state-sponsored churches. Instead, Aikman writes, they become members of either underground evangelical organizations known as "house churches" or underground Catholic churches loyal to the Vatican. The house churches are growing the fastest: even in Beijing there are more than seven hundred. In other provinces, such as Henan in central China and Wenzhou in eastern China, house churches, identified by discreet red crosses, dominate the landscape. Chinese evangelical groups proselytize across the country; Aikman follows the Fancheng Fellowship, a Chinese evangelical organization that now has several million members, as it quietly cultivates new worshippers all over China.

The regime's denial of religious freedom only encourages Chinese to join house churches, which may be viewed as not only places of worship but also as ways to resist the government. In the past three years, Beijing has acknowledged that religion has become a permanent part of Chinese society and even contributed some government money to build new state-sponsored churches. Yet in keeping with its bipolar repression, the government has simultaneously eviscerated house churches that were building up their congregations. A remarkable set of secret documents uncovered by Freedom House in 2002 reveals that the Chinese authorities, across twenty-two provinces, tortured young evangelical girls by sticking electric rods in their vaginas and burning their breasts, killed more than one hundred evangelicals, and jailed some twenty thousand believers. One of the "crimes" of which the authorities accused detained evangelicals was "praying for world peace."

Aikman also captures the scope of repression against underground churches. His book is poorly organized, flitting from one aspect of Christianity to the next, but its most compelling sections include long profiles of Chinese Christian leaders who have been detained for years. In these compassionate portraits, Aikman shows how the limited opening of Chinese society has not resulted in an easing of pressure on Christian leaders—though in doing so, he may have exposed too much detail about leaders who did not want the state to find them.

Many house churches hold enormous fevered meetings that would shock even the most inspired American evangelicals. At some house churches, four thousand worshippers meet in secret locations, where they vigorously attest their ties to Jesus. One house sect, known as "The Shouters," scream "Jesus is Lord!" over and over. Another underground sect has become known as "The Weepers" because it emphasizes prolonged sobbing, which it is convinced has some theological value. Another, known as "The Disciples," reportedly believes that the devil exists in all humans, and that true believers have to physically beat their friends to expunge Satan.

But the explosion of Christianity in China is not only an affair of the soul. It could have enormous political consequences, a point that Aikman highlights by subtitling his book "How Christianity Is Transforming China and Changing the Global Balance of Power." Aikman argues that the Christianization of China will lead many Chinese to adopt liberal and compassionate views of governance and of international relations. The growth of Christianity, he believes, will come with an acceptance of the "Augustinian sense of international responsibility ... a profound sense of restraint, justice, and order." Though he admits China's house churches are cautious about pushing for political freedom, he believes a Christianized China—especially one catalyzed by evangelical Protestantism, with its focus on individual empowerment—would change the nature of the country, preparing it for reform. And a Christian China would be less likely to see international interactions as a zero-sum affair: it would share with the United States "a common worldview on many thorny questions of international affairs." Aikman even suggests that a Christianized China might become a powerful advocate for Israel, a democracy and a country of obvious importance to evangelical Christians.

Other commentators share his sentiments. Ian Buruma, in his book *Bad Elements*, a study of Chinese rebels, notes that many Chinese dissidents exiled to the United States have turned to evangelical Christianity, in part because they believe that religion will be a force for

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change in China. Tony Lambert, the author of *China's Christian Millions*, another book on the country's Great Awakening, argues that, after the Tiananmen massacre, thousands of Chinese intellectuals turned to Christianity because they believed that only a complete spiritual overhaul—which could ultimately lead to a political overhaul—could truly transform China. In this spiritual overhaul, Lambert believes, Chinese Christians are increasingly deciding that, when they have to choose between the state and God, they will come down on the side of God—a defiance of Beijing that ultimately can lead to a wider revolt. "The heart of the house church movement takes a conscious stand on the authority of Scripture and has worked out a biblical view of church-state relations," Lambert writes. "If clashes [between church and state] arise, then they are prepared to say ... 'We must obey God rather than men.'"

The Kiss

Talking in the parked car. Wooded street
of Victorian homes across from a bay

dappled with seaweed, scraps
of black wood.

Engine running and heat
wraps our necks and feet.

Outside, a summer night. Chill,
windless. We had walked

through town,
past closed restaurants, locked shops.
One bar open, and before its doors swung shut

piano notes poured through the empty street.

Then
no music.

EVE GRUBIN

Unfortunately, Aikman and Lambert, as well as many Christian organizations in the West, which have made China a prime target of evangelism, are too charitable in their interpretations of how this Great Awakening will affect China's political course. Certainly, Christianity could be a threat to the party's brittle rule. Any institution capable of organizing large numbers of people outside of state control has the potential to challenge the party, as happened with Falun Gong. And because Chinese evangelicals already possess a network of churches operating underground but maintaining ties to overseas organizations, they are well equipped to conceal political activities from the government and are prepared to step into any political vacuum. Moreover, Christianity has proven particularly popular in regions of China with some of the highest unemployment rates, like the northeast Rust Belt and increasingly impoverished rural areas. "Is it too speculative to see a connection between the desperate suffering of the people [in certain areas of China] and the subsequent great openness of the peasants to the Christian gospel?" asks Lambert. House churches could provide an organization that united laid-off workers from all over the country, who thus far have mounted numerous but relatively isolated protests.

This is not a new idea—the combination of church leadership, subversive Christian theology, and angry unionists and peasants was what made Solidarity successful against communist Poland. And there is some evidence that Chinese Christians are already beginning to direct their attention to the regime. John Pomfret, *The Washington Post*'s Beijing correspondent, found in 2002 that Wenzhou's Communist Party leadership tried to halt all Sunday-school religious instruction, expecting house church pastors to back down meekly. Instead, the pastors organized Christians, including Christian businesspeople, to prevent the closure of Sunday schools; Wenzhou Party officials desisted. Similarly, during last year's SARS crisis, when the government banned all public meetings, many Chinese pastors simply refused to follow orders, holding congregations throughout the SARS epidemic. More aggressively, other house churches have used their pulpits to call for an end to Communist Party rule, have played larger roles in organizing unemployed laborers, and have refused to submit to government orders not to baptize believers.

But just because they work against the regime does not mean that these Christian groups are reformers. Many house church leaders are quite conservative and narrowly focused on evangelism. Put down for so long—the church in China was much more harshly suppressed than in Poland—many house church members have little knowledge of the Bible or of liberal, and liberating, theology. Evangelical Christianity is spreading so quickly in China in part because it is so emotional, so experiential. The Bible is used "as a talisman, like Mao's Little Red Book," Richard Madsen, a scholar of Chinese Christianity, has observed. Lambert admits that there are only about twelve hundred students across China engaged in full-time theological training—the kind of education that would help them to teach average Chinese about the textual basis of Christianity, and about the potentially liberal aspects of the faith. There are few well-trained Protestant pastors; *Time* has reported that in the Chinese countryside there are some fifty thousand believers for every cleric. This lack of training only plays into the hands of the most demagogic and least intellectual evangelical groups.

Consequently, while some house church leaders are knowledgeable about textual and traditional Christianity, too many house church worshippers gravitate to the most superficial and most heterodox elements of the religion. Though some house churches, especially those in urban areas, seriously study biblical themes, often house churches focus on the unthinking and the superstitious—miracles, instant salvation, acts of physical transport such as weeping and shouting. Faye Pearson, a foreign teacher of Christianity in China, told *Time* that seven out of ten converts to Christianity in the country "come to faith through illness": they believe that Christianity has healed them. Even Lambert admits that "Chinese Christians adhere to a robust biblical supernaturalism which believes in a sovereign God who can answer the prayers of his people in remarkable ways." In fact, many Chinese Christians follow what is essentially folk religion with only minor Christian elements. All this is not exactly the basis for the kind of intellectual ferment that produced liberation theology, or Solidarity.

Worse, in contrast to the idea that evangelical Christianity will empower worshippers, creating a

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pool of questioning Chinese who can build an open society, house churches too often simply develop into authoritarian fiefs, with worshippers unknowledgeable about Christian tradition and theology focusing their energy on one charismatic leader. There are many instances of Chinese groups using Christianity to promote individual leaders—groups that essentially turn into cults. Just like the party mandarins, few of these charismatic leaders have much knowledge of or care for liberal democracy, civil society, or the innate rights of non-believers and atheists. And though some house church leaders have made efforts to work with their peers, many of the more charismatic leaders encourage their flock to ignore or attack other churches.

Where is Chinese Christianity's John Paul II or Joseph Zens, the democratic reform-minded Catholic bishop of Hong Kong? Instead there are "The Weepers," who inculcate absolute fealty to their leader, Peter Xu. Lambert recounts how a charismatic preacher in Henan convinced gullible peasants to wait all evening for Jesus to appear out of a local river; when the peasants waded into the river, they were all swept away and drowned. There is the South China Church, which demonstrates similar fealty to its leader, Gong Shengliang. There are "The Disciples," a group that gained more than one hundred thousand followers in one province, who were so apocalyptic that they forced local farmers and students to stop working. There are groups such as these in nearly every province in China today. And while these organizations do not comprise the majority of Chinese Christians, they are by far the loudest, and the most intensive recruiters. In a state that makes it difficult for all religious groups, including more moderate house churches, to recruit and to educate, more heterodox groups are likely to gain among the uneducated masses. A total breakdown in social order, meanwhile, is only likely to fuel these fringe groups.

In some of the more heterodox organizations, leaders even proclaim that they are the Sons of God. One organization, called Established King, grew up around a peasant farmer who proclaimed himself the messiah and soon drew thousands of followers. (After having sex with hundreds of women, its leader was arrested in the mid-1990s.) In the most extreme case, a sect called Eastern Lightning, which claims hundreds of thousands of members, believes that Jesus has returned to earth and taken on the form of a woman living in central China. Eastern Lightning devotees worship this woman and try to force other Christians to worship her as well; just like the CCP authorities, the group uses brutal methods to get its way, kidnapping members of other churches—and sometimes torturing them—until they pledge allegiance to the cult's Christ-figure.

AMERICAN EVANGELICALS HAVE failed to understand the true nature of many of the house churches. In authoritarian nations, liberal democrats are often thrown in jail; but being thrown in jail in an authoritarian nation does not make you a liberal democrat. Yet the Bush administration, and American evangelical organizations that smuggle Bibles into China and send thousands of missionaries into the country, seem unwilling seriously to probe their counterparts in China. (Indeed, it is hardly surprising that Aikman's relatively positive account of Chinese Christianity was picked up by Regnery, the conservative press that brought us Oliver North's *War Stories* and Ann Coulter's shrieking nonsense.) In the 1990s, the Chinese founder of Eastern Lightning came to America and appealed for political asylum, claiming that he would be persecuted as a Christian back in China. He apparently was granted asylum without the United States even questioning his background; and as a result America did not discover that Eastern Lightning was a dangerous group known for kidnapping and torturing other Christians.

China's Great Awakening is just as likely to result in the kind of tumult that happened in the wake of the Taiping Rebellion—which started with a mix of Christianity and native folk practice—as it is to create a liberal revolution. Back then, a decline in state control; a rise in unemployment, migration and population pressures; and an increase in heterodox, charismatic religious movements created violent political change, in which the state was weakened and ultimately overthrown, only to be replaced by warring interest groups who fought among themselves and against remnants of the old regime. The Taiping Rebellion ultimately resulted in some twenty million deaths. China is a much more populous country today. ■

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NEW YORK DIARIST

Red Dawn

IF YOU HAPPENED TO PASS Radio City Music Hall on a pleasant Friday evening earlier this summer, you might have wondered why midtown Manhattan suddenly looked a lot like downtown Moscow. On the sidewalk, an endless stream of six-foot-tall, peroxide-blonde Slavic princesses clad in white leather paraded past on the arms of portly, middle-aged Aeroflot executives in terrible Soviet-era suits. Inside the hall, it looked as if someone had dumped out the contents of a Moscow subway car: Elderly pensioners slumped wearily in their seats, teenagers in tight jeans chatted away on their cell phones in a mixture of Russian and English slang, frumpy women sat glumly knitting while beefy men clad in muscle T-shirts and gold chains eyed each other with vague menace. The occasion for this surreal spectacle was an encore performance of the annual Golden Gramophone Awards, the Russian music industry's equivalent of the American Grammy Awards, a shameless marriage of MTV glitz and Russian kitsch normally held in Moscow's Kremlin.

THERE ARE FEW MORE BIZARRE ASPECTS of contemporary Russian culture than its pop music, which awkwardly blends the last three decades of American pop into a strange mixture of style and camp, magnificently exemplified by the two Russian megastars who headlined the evening, Filipp Kirkorov and Verka Serdiuchka. Kirkorov—a cross between Rod Stewart, Michael Jackson, and Nathan Lane—rose to fame as a pop singer, protégé, and boytoy of the great Soviet-era rock diva Alla Pugacheva. At the Golden Gramophone Awards, he sang, danced, and strutted his way through more costume changes than at a Britney Spears concert. But the "best costume" prize went to the inimitable Serdiuchka. The wildly popular drag persona of a young comedian named Andrei Danilko, Serdiuchka is, essentially, a large-breasted, Ukrainian Dame Edna.

BEING A RUSSIAN AWARDS SHOW, FLASHY dance numbers alternated with numbingly formulaic award speeches. The producers had eliminated the pretense of competition, Soviet-style, so one by one the pop acts dutifully lip-synched their way through this year's crop of chart-topping, syrupy ballads and up-tempo dance anthems before receiving their miniature golden gramophones. On hand to present the awards was a decidedly motley crew: several tongue-tied Russian businessmen, Olympic gold medal figure skater Oksana Baiul, twin boxing champs Vladimir and Vitaly Klichko, and a hilariously out-of-place Dr. Ruth. Every major immigrant cultural event in New York City requires a shameless politician, and this evening did not disappoint. Halfway through the show, an upbeat Chuck Schumer burst onto stage, shouting, "*Spasibo, spasibo*," and blithely claimed credit for bringing the first Russians (i.e., the Soviet Jewish refuseniks) to the United States 30 years earlier. The senator's performance was so good he impressed even emcee Kirkorov, who candidly congratulated him for putting the mumbled bureaucratic monotone of the Russian speakers to shame with his American gusto.

THE GOLDEN GRAMOPHONE AWARDS came to Manhattan as part of this year's Russian Heritage Week, which, per classic Russian logic, lasted not seven but 13 days. Across the city, Russian New York celebrated with street fairs, classical music concerts, art exhibitions, dance parties, and public ceremonies. The sheer range of events, not to mention the ticket prices—at Radio City Music Hall, many of the 5,400 tickets sold went for $250 a seat—showed the degree to which Russians have assimilated into the American middle class. And yet, the fact that they were paying to see Russian pop stars performing their awards show in New York also suggested the opposite. With nightly news and soap operas from Russia via cable television, cheap international calling plans, the Internet, and imported entertainment, Russians abroad now have all the familiar cultural comforts of home without the bad weather, bad plumbing, and bad politics.

AT FIRST GLANCE, RUSSIAN MUSIC HAS blithely embraced the worst of America's oversexed and vacuous bubblegum pop. (Hence Russia's recent leading girl group Tatu, a teenage pseudo-lesbian duo dreamt up by a former advertising writer.) Yet the superficial dazzle and gaudy packaging conceal a characteristically Russian quality: nostalgia. Nowhere was this more evident than in the grand, Soviet-style finale of the Golden Gramophone Awards, with all the performers assembled onstage to sing Serdiuchka's hit "Everything's Going to Be Great." As a synthesized horn section blasted the vaguely Russian folk-style melody over a fast oom-pah, disco-folk beat, costumed peasant dancers kicked through the *kazatzke*, and Serdiuchka and her friends sang:

> If your head hurts in the morning /
> We'll tell it you to straight—You don't know how to drink! / But since it's not fun to nurse a hangover alone / It's better to stick with your fellow workers and just drink a little bit at a time /
> Then everything's going to be great!
> Everything's going to be just fine!

THERE IT WAS, LIVE ONSTAGE AT RADIO City Music Hall: the old Soviet ideal of one big happy family of peasants, all dressed up in their quaint ethnic costumes and singing about the greatness of life in the collective, led by a funny-looking lady bumpkin from backwater Ukraine. Only, instead of Communist dreams of gleaming modern tractors or bumper crop harvests, post-Soviet life has become just one big party featuring the greatest Russian folk art of all: drunkenness.

IN THE FACE OF AN UNCERTAIN ECONOMIC future, with endemic corruption, implacable crime, and regular financial collapses, their empire reduced to the quagmire of Chechnya and their government slipping steadily back toward political authoritarianism, Russians are clearly in search of simpler, happier times. A heavy dose of nostalgia, as always, offers a selective, sweetened slice of the past as a substitute for the harder questions of the present. So, while political liberalism dies a slow, creeping death in Russia, the music industry peddles its Potemkin-like brand of pop nostalgia. And the show goes on. **JAMES LOEFFLER**

James Loeffler, a doctoral student at Columbia University, recently returned from a Fulbright fellowship in Russia.

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Broadening What's Meant by School

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To be effective, schools serving poor children must do a lot. They can't assume that their children come to first grade knowing that letters make sounds or that older children get family support to do homework. It's not enough to provide coherent and interesting instruction. Schools that serve the disadvantaged must motivate and compensate as well as instruct.

Schools in which children and teachers occupy the same space five hours a day, five days a week can be enough for children who have lots of support. But they aren't enough for children disadvantaged by poverty, violence, or lack of English-language skills.

The most successful schools for poor children keep much longer days (9–12 hours) and include nutritional, health, counseling, and recreational programs designed to compliment instruction.

The value of such an approach may be seen in of the Knowledge Is Power Program (KIPP), developed for middle schools by Teach for America alumni to serve poor Hispanic children, and the Beacons' middle-school network. Religious groups have also created similar schools for poor children. The Jesuits' Nativity schools, for example, provide moral instruction (actions have consequences, what you become is up to you) and organize sports and fun. By adding hours to the school day, they also ensure that students are available for extra tutoring and supervised homework.

If these schools aren't the ultimate solution to the education of poor city children, they are a big step toward it. Unfortunately they are hard to reproduce. They put big burdens on teachers, and they need adults in school for 12 hours each day, not just 5 or 6.

By expanding the meaning of school, KIPP and similar programs also expand the costs. It costs a great deal more money to run a school 9–12 hours a day, rather than 6, and to develop integrated learning-focused approaches to instruction, recreation, and family services. Today, KIPP and similar schools live on donations. Even when they operate as charter schools and receive public funding, such schools must draw as much as one-third of their income from foundations and businesses.

But philanthropic support isn't adequate to reach the millions of city children now in narrowly defined six-hour schools. **We have to find a way to support enlarged schools with public funds.**

The extra money could come from funds normally used to support separate health and social service agencies, which would require a wrenching change in social services. Funds that now sustain separate social service agencies would go instead to schools, such as KIPP, that serve as comprehensive service providers. Schools would then be more like parishes than government agencies, able to draw from a wider array of expertise—and to spend more money—than is available to support their purely instructional roles.

Effective schools for poor children require more money than is available for other schools and more than is in the education budget. But increasing school-specific spending is not necessarily the right answer. We need to make much better use of the funds available for youth services.

—Paul T. Hill

Paul T. Hill is a distinguished visiting fellow at the Hoover Institution; a member of Hoover's Koret Task Force on K–12 Education; and a research professor at the University of Washington's Daniel J. Evans School of Public Affairs.

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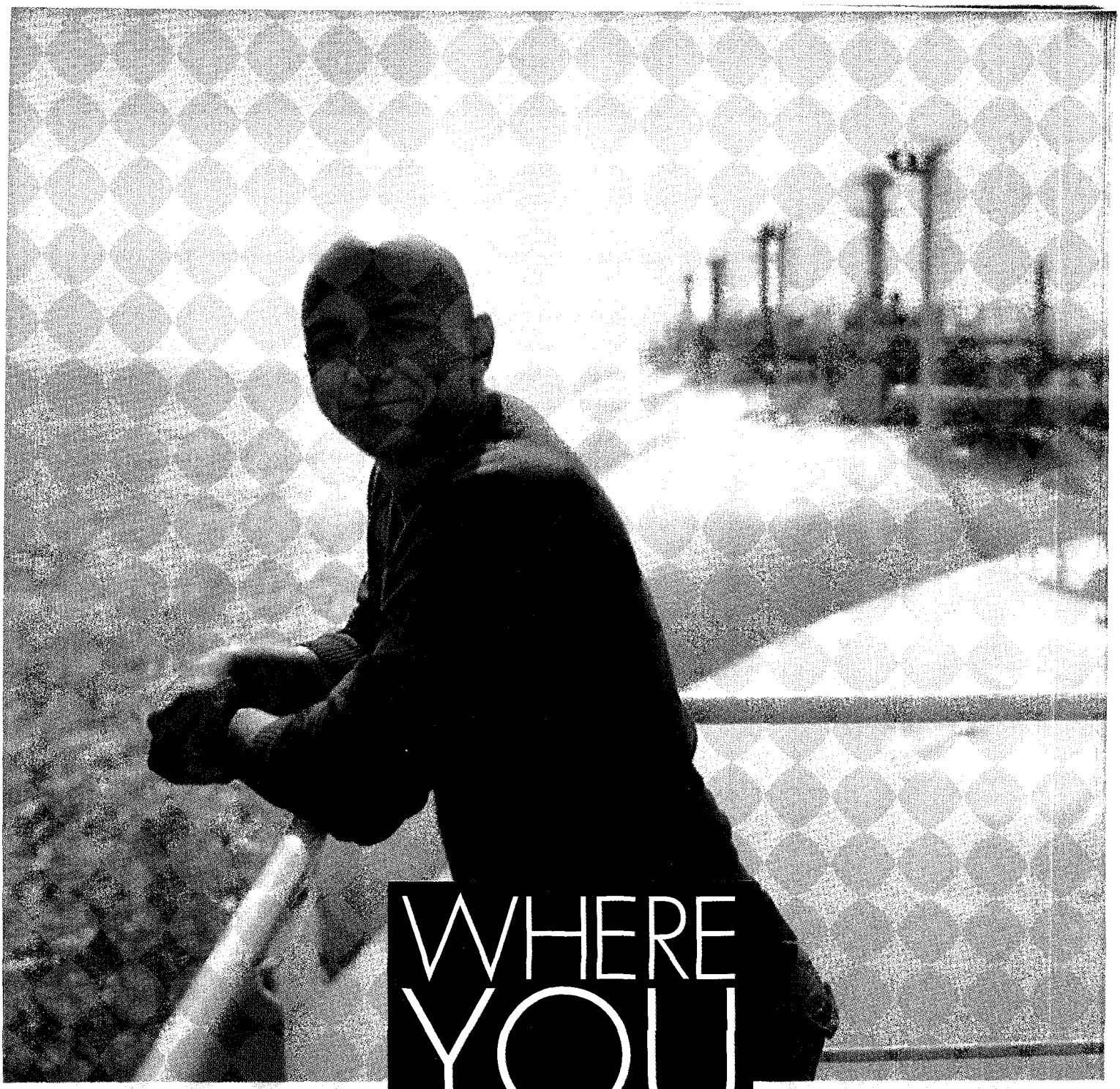

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